

# Time and Tide and Munera Pulveris

By JOHN RUSKIN

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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## MUNERA PULVERIS

### ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

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## INTRODUCTION

AN increasing number of those present-day readers who refuse to flee at the sound of the name Victorian will be glad to rediscover for themselves these essays and letters of John Ruskin. The subtitles of both appear at first sight somewhat forbidding: the one threatening a text-book treatise on Political Economy and the other apparently presaging a deadly exhortation to industry. But we cannot read far in either before we discover how searchingly Ruskin analyzes the only means of achieving human happiness, individual and social. And his constructive social program strikingly anticipates many of the most advanced ideals of our own time.

Written in the middle of the past century during the period of our Civil War, these two little volumes of Ruskin here reprinted are the product of a new era not only in the history of England and America but in his own career. They represent the transformation of an art critic into a social reformer. How significant was this transition we can understand if we recall the story of Ruskin's life.

Born on the 8th of February, 1819, into an affluent London home, he received the most careful and strict training which devoted parents could bestow upon an only child. His father, a self-made wine merchant, surrounded him with every opportunity afforded by an atmosphere of literary and artistic culture, while his mother imposed rigid moral and religious teaching. From the age of four the sensitive, imaginative boy was deeply impressed with the natural environment of Herne Hill, "a rustic eminence" just outside the city, to which the family had recently moved. In the same year when asked by a well-known painter what he would like as the background of

his portrait, he replied, "Blue Hills," and the strangely mature answer was prophetic of the many journeys he was to take with his father through the length and breadth of England and of his passionate lifelong devotion to the "panoramic apocalypse of this lovely world" both in nature and in art. Nursing his precocious talents with sedulous care, the Ruskins sent their son to Christ Church, Oxford, where he followed prescribed duties with a rather bored faithfulness, won the famous Newdigate prize in poetry, and graduated A B in 1842. His course was interrupted, however, by an enforced interval of eighteen months when dangerous signs of tubercular trouble hurried him to Italy and the Alps.

Then almost without warning appeared one of the most astonishing works ever written by a youth of twenty-three. It was called "Modern Painters," with the subtitle, "their Superiority in the Art of Landscape Painting to all the Ancient Masters proved by Examples of the True, the Beautiful, and the Intellectual, from the Works of Modern Artists, especially from those of J. M. W. Turner, Esq., R. A." The title is worth quoting in full even in so cursory a sketch as this because it reveals the militant youthful dogmatism of the author, the exact nature of the book, and its inspiration in the desire to champion the great Turner. So sweeping was its attack on established tradition of standards in art that it seemed wiser to the young author's friends for him to sign himself merely "A Graduate of Oxford," but the book created such a sensation that his identity soon became known, and from that moment Ruskin became one of the famous men of the century. From that moment, too, it became clear that his career lay not in the church to which his parents had dedicated him, but in eloquent revelation of truth in nature and in art.

For seventeen years he devoted himself ardently to this task, and in rapid succession he published his results: "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" in 1849, "Stones of

Venice" in 1851-53, and four other volumes of "Modern Painters," the last in 1860. Almost inevitably he spent much time in France, Switzerland, and Italy, exploring Alpine peaks and old cathedrals, drawing and painting—and reconstructing human works in the light of human motives. In 1848 Ruskin suddenly married Miss Euphemia Gray, a brilliant society beauty, but the union proved wholly unhappy, and five years later she divorced her husband to become the wife of his friend, the celebrated painter Millais. The veil of silence has been drawn over the whole episode, and Ruskin's biographers differ radically about the effect which the ill-starred and only nominal marriage exerted upon him. In his intimate autobiography, "Praeterita," and numerous letters he never referred to the affair, although he has described in moving words the rejection which he later suffered at the hands of Miss Rose La Touche.

It was at this time that Ruskin was distracted from his personal tragedy to the larger tragedy of social degradation. From the beginning of his important published work he had sought for the human values in art; particularly had he emphasized the novel conviction that great art could be wrought only by great men and for great peoples. But it was becoming still clearer to him that art is only a mockery among a people submerged in oppressive toil and wretchedness. In 1851 he had come definitely under the spell of the fiery prophet, Carlyle, and of the reformer, Maurice. In the same year he wrote in the famous chapter on "The Nature of Gothic" in "Stones of Venice" "the animation of England's multitudes is sent like fuel to feed the factory smoke . . . We have much studied and much perfected the great civilized invention of the division of labor, only we give it a false name. It is not, truly speaking, the labor that is divided, but the men—Divided into mere segments of men—broken into small fragments and crumbs of life. And the great cry that rises from our manufacturing cities, louder

than their furnace blast, is that we manufacture everything there except men. And all the evil to which that cry is urging our myriads can be met only by a right understanding on the part of all classes of what kinds of labor are good for men, raising them, and making them happier." All reform, he continued, must begin by a concerted and "determined sacrifice of such convenience or beauty or cheapness as is to be got only by the degradation of the workman, and by equally determined demand for the products and results of healthy and ennobling labor."

This whole chapter with its nobly impassioned challenge to an industrial society became the informal charter of the famous Working Men's College and copies were distributed at the formal opening in 1854. Already, Ruskin was turning toward various projects for social reformation like this pioneer institution which was the concrete forerunner of night schools, workers' classes, and the general movement for adult education at the present time. The very home training which had so sheltered him within the seclusion of culture was urging him forth into a wider field of effort. As he had crusaded for the recognition of truth in art, so he would now crusade for social justice. But the world would have been amazed had it known the revolution in his thought. For at that moment he was acclaimed by such important men as William Morris and Burne-Jones as the "Luther of the Arts." George Eliot spoke of "the grand doctrines of truth and sincerity in art, and the nobleness and solemnity of our human life which he teaches with the inspiration of a Hebrew prophet." His commanding position at the age of thirty-five was described by "Punch" in the lines,

I paints and paints,  
Hears no complaints,  
And sells before I'm dry,  
Till savage Ruskin  
Sticks his tusks in,  
And nobody will buy.

After the opening of the Working Men's College, to which he gave both his services as teacher and also generous financial support, Ruskin began to lecture more frequently in various parts of England. His subject was ostensibly art, but the title of an address at Manchester in 1857, "The Political Economy of Art" reveals the deepening concern with the practical human condition of life out of which and for which art is created. As far back as 1849 he had written in the "Seven Lamps of Architecture" "I have paused, not once nor twice as I wrote, as the thought has crossed me how soon all Architecture may be vain, except that which is not made with hands" As he afterward declared in "Fors Clavigera," "I will put up with this state of things not an hour longer. I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like. the very light of the morning sky has become hateful to me because of the misery that I know of, and see the signs of, where I know it not, which no imagination can interpret too bitterly"

In the spring of 1860 the completion of the fifth and last volume of "Modern Painters" marked the end of his epoch-making interpretation of art. At once he left England to return to his beloved vale of Chamouni in Switzerland which had inspired his earlier eloquence, and there amid the "cloudless peace of the snows" he penned the burning words of his new gospel. When this appeared as four articles in the "Cornhill Magazine" during the summer, the world was much astonished as it had been at the appearance of the first volume of "Modern Painters,"—and more scandalized. So great was the protest that the new editor, Thackeray, was compelled to discontinue the series, for the author had thrown a bomb into the camp of entrenched economic doctrine and threatened to explode the very foundations of the existing order. Published two years later under the title of "Unto this Last," the four essays boldly state as their purpose a

flat denial of the prevailing theory of laissez-faire in economic and political organization Carlyle had called political economy the "dismal" science, Ruskin declared it was no science at all but a basic "lie" The whole laissez-faire doctrine of unrestrained competition he contended was a brutal travesty of just relations between men, the so-called law of supply and demand belied human needs, and the mere accumulation of material "wealth" a defiance of man's moral and spiritual nature "There is no wealth but life," he concluded "That country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings"

Despite the outcry which greeted such heresies Ruskin pressed the attack in four more articles first appearing in "Fraser's Magazine" in 1862 and later, in 1872, published as six essays in a separate volume under the title of "Munera Pulveris" But the second work was as constructive as "Unto this Last" was destructive, and it prepared the way for the more comprehensive summary of Ruskin's own proposals for the ideal state, published as letters in various newspapers in 1867 and under the title of "Time and Tide," which marks the climax of his social teaching

Almost overnight a national enthusiasm for Ruskin, the herald of a new revelation of nature and art, was changed to scorn for the herald of social reform. As he himself said, the world now mocked him as a "superannuated enthusiast" and a "delirious visionary" Nearly all his friends turned against him, nearly all but Carlyle, who hailed the "fierce lightning bolts" which Ruskin was "desperately pouring into the black world of anarchy" Although saddened and discouraged, Ruskin did not turn aside from the ardent pursuit of truth With almost incredible energy he continued writing and lecturing on both art and the manifold aspects of life In spite of his unpopularity his prestige as the foremost interpreter of the fine arts was so great that only two years after the



appearance of "Time and Tide" he was honored by appointment to the newly founded chair of art at Oxford, the Slade Professorship, which he held intermittently until 1885. During the same period (1871-1884) he composed "Fors Clavigera," some ninety-six letters addressed to "the Workmen and Labourers of Great Britain," reiterating the ideas of his first three social manifestoes in a desultory, intensely personal manner.

But he did far more than lecture and write. During these same years he threw himself into many kinds of actual (one hesitates to say practical) schemes to carry out the reforms which he so eloquently urged. In the opening letter of "Fors" he impulsively wrote "I will endure it no longer, but henceforward, with any few or many who will help, do my poor best to abate this misery." This poor best represented gifts of no less than his entire fortune which amounted to a million dollars. He had always been lavish in private charity, but now he endowed various new social projects. Chief among these was the famous Guild of St. George which he organized to "slay the dragon of industrial slavery," a practical plan for settling people on the land and helping them to work out agricultural, industrial, and cultural freedom. He generously subsidized the reclamation of slum houses and the establishment of model tea-shops and various home industries. He himself set to work sweeping a London pavement and put his Oxford undergraduates to repairing the Hinksey road. If he was a dreamer at least he tried with every means in his power to live his dreams.

In the midst of these practical activities Ruskin moved to Brantwood overlooking Coniston Water in the English Lake country, where he lived for the last twenty-eight years of his life. Never robust in health, he suffered a severe breakdown which affected his mind, but after rallying he continued writing, lecturing, and traveling both in England and on the Continent. The final record of his career he himself wrote in that most subtly charming of

autobiographies, "*Praeterita*," which he brought down to 1889. From then on to the end he remained in well-earned retirement at Brantwood. There he died on January 20, 1900, surrounded by masterpieces of Turner, in whose defense he had begun his memorable career. In response to his expressed wish, he was buried in the little churchyard at Coniston, and the family were obliged to decline the supreme honor of a grave in Westminster Abbey.

To read Ruskin's works is a liberal education. His complete writings are in extent actually greater than the five-foot book shelf of knowledge and there is hardly a dull page in any volume. But even more remarkable than mere bulk is the range of his interests, for he wrote on almost every visible aspect of the natural world: mountains, rivers, clouds, trees, minerals, on painting, sculpture, architecture, drawing, music, on literature ancient and modern, on history, philosophy, theology, education, ethics, social and political economy. Amid all these riches the reader is somewhat disconcerted because Ruskin's eager and versatile mind so often attempts to pour thoughts on so many diverse themes into the same essay or volume. Yet his whole work is unified by his search for truth in nature and in art, for justice in social relations.

The true economic foundation of justice in all social relations Ruskin sought to outline in the earlier series of essays "*Munera Pulveris*" reprinted in the present volume. His concern here is with the just conditions which should prevail in the production, distribution, and use of wealth. To him the aim of this three-fold process is "the support of population in healthy and happy life." Wealth must therefore consist of "things in themselves valuable" and not merely of things which happen to be objects of indiscriminate desire. In the light of this definition, obviously, Ruskin's whole system depends upon his conception of values and hence upon his whole philosophy of life.

Applying his theory of values, Ruskin inquires what

kinds of food, houses, clothes, and fuel ought to be produced, in what quantity, and by whom. In the fifth chapter, "Government," he shows how, through customs, laws, and councils, that government itself can equitably regulate economic processes. The final chapter, "Mastership," like the twenty-second letter ("Masters") of "Time and Tide" pictures through concrete illustrations the beneficent distribution of land and labor among the poor. Thus his conclusion sketches practical means of achieving an ideal distribution of values through all classes of society. "There is no other choice," he earnestly insists in the last sentence, if we would not "take dust for deity." By which phrase he affords some explanation of the cryptic title, "Munera Pulveris," "Gifts of the Dust"—referring to the ignoble mercenary character of prevailing economic doctrine in contrast with his own conviction that "the only wealth is life."

To clarify in still broader scope the ideals and principles and methods of conserving and developing this "wealth" was the purpose of "Time and Tide." As we have already noted, the letters which compose this later volume illustrate Ruskin's habit of roving widely through many fields of human interest, but out of the profusion of thought emerges the most complete and coherent outline of his social philosophy which can be found anywhere in his extensive writing.

Proposing a concrete and constructive commonwealth, it was inspired directly by the agitation for a substantial extension of the vote and consequently wider representation in Parliament among the working classes. Labor was thoroughly aroused after the defeat of the first Reform Bill of 1866 and organized clubs throughout the country to compel new action. It was a tense moment in the history of representative government, and Ruskin seized the occasion to ask his fellow laborers for an earnest nation-wide searching of hearts. "You are all agape, my friends," he says in Letter III, "for this mighty privilege

of having your opinions represented in Parliament. The concession might be desirable, . . . if only it were quite certain that you had got any opinions to represent. But have you? Are you agreed on any single thing you systematically want? Less work and more wages, of course, but how much lessening of work do you suppose is possible? Do you think the time will ever come for everybody to have *no* work and *all* wages? Or have you yet taken the trouble so much as to think out the nature of the true connection between wages and work?" To help them to think out this connection in all its relations to human happiness was Ruskin's aim in these letters.

It is clearly an ideal commonwealth which he constructs, one which in its divisions of society owes much to Plato, but adapted to the conditions of the nineteenth century and—may we not say?—to our own time. It is not, however, a socialist state. He does not advocate the nationalization either of land or of industry, but the control of all the processes of economic life through the medium of guilds under government supervision. So also, though less obtrusively, he would regulate social life under the guidance, rather than coercion of the "overseers," each of whom might be responsible for the welfare of a hundred families,—“so that it may be impossible for any person, however humble, to suffer from unknown want or live in unrecognized crimes.”

The foundation of such a social order was not a belief in any democratic theory of “human equality,” which Ruskin emphatically repudiated, but a belief in certain fundamental rights inhering in each individual. Among these are the right to be well-born, and hence Ruskin would regulate marriage and the size of families; the right to education at public expense, the right to labor under safe and healthful conditions for a wage that insures modest comfort. If the state could make such rights universally effective, Ruskin implies, no one would need to worry about the abstraction “equality.”

But by insisting upon the duty of political establishment and maintenance of such rights of course Ruskin accepted the responsibility of laying down a theory of the function of government. Hence he challenged the *laissez-faire* doctrine in statecraft as well as in economic organization. The grounds of his attack were perfectly clear as long as misery prevailed among so large a majority of people, it seemed to him obvious that the duty of government was to step in and use its power to create conditions of human happiness.

If Ruskin substituted sentiment for science, as his opponents declared, he might have answered in the phrase of our time that he was merely humanizing the "sciences" of economics and sociology which had failed to take account of human needs. He little dreamed that he would actually reform political economy or that within half a century most of the important reforms which he urged would be written into legislation or at least widely accepted by enlightened thinkers. For he had no illusions of a sudden revolution. "Be assured," he says, "that no great change for the better can ever be easily accomplished, nor quickly, nor by impulsive ill-regulated effort, nor by bad men, nor even by good men, without much suffering." But the social conscience of English-speaking peoples has responded to the challenge of swiftly changing conditions created by an industrial civilization. And to Ruskin more than to any other one man belongs the credit of awakening that conscience.

PAUL KAUFMAN.



**TIME AND TIDE**  
**BY WEARE AND TYNE**





## PREFACE

THE following letters were written to Mr Thomas Dixon, a working cork-cutter of Sunderland, during the agitation for reform in the spring of the present year. They contain, in the plainest terms I could use, the substance of what I then desired to say to our English workmen, which was briefly this —“The reform you desire may give you more influence in Parliament, but your influence there will of course be useless to you,—perhaps worse than useless,—until you have wisely made up your minds as to what you wish Parliament to do for you, and when you *have* made up your minds about that, you will find, not only that you can do it for yourselves, without the intervention of Parliament, but that eventually nobody *but* yourselves can do it. And to help you, as far as one of your old friends may, in so making up your minds, such and such things are what it seems to me you should ask for, and, moreover, strive for, with your heart and might.”

The letters now published relate only to one division of the laws which I desired to recommend to the consideration of our operatives,—those, namely, bearing upon honesty of work, and honesty of exchange. I hope in the course of next year that I may be able to complete the second part of the series, which will relate to the possible comforts and wholesome laws of familiar household life, and the share which a labouring nation may attain in the skill, and the treasures, of the higher arts.

The letters are republished as they were written, with here and there correction of a phrase, and omission of one or two passages of merely personal or temporary interest,

the headings only are added, in order to give the reader some clue to the general aim of necessarily desultory discussion, and the portions of Mr Dixon's letters in reply, referred to in the text, are added in the Appendix, and will be found well deserving of attention.

DENMARK HILL,  
*December 14, 1867.*

# Time and Tide

## By Weare and Tyne

### LETTER I

THE TWO KINDS OF CO-OPERATION—IN ITS HIGHEST  
SENSE IT IS NOT YET THOUGHT OF

DENMARK HILL, *February 4, 1867*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You have now everything I have yet published on political economy, but there are several points in these books of mine which I intended to add notes to, and it seems little likely I shall get that soon done. So I think the best way of making up for the want of these is to write you a few simple letters, which you can read to other people, or send to be printed, if you like, in any of your journals where you think they may be useful.

I especially want you, for one thing, to understand the sense in which the word “co-operation” is used in my books. You will find I am always pleading for it, and yet I don’t at all mean the co-operation of partnership (as opposed to the system of wages) which is now so gradually extending itself among our great firms. I am glad to see it doing so, yet not altogether glad, for none of you who are engaged in the immediate struggle between the system of co-operation and the system of mastership know how much the dispute involves; and none of us know the results to which it may finally lead. For the alternative is not, in reality, only between two modes of conducting business—it is between two different states of society. It is not the question whether an amount of wages, no greater

in the end than that at present received by the men, may be paid to them in a way which shall give them share in the risks, and interest in the prosperity of the business. The question is, really, whether the profits which are at present taken, as his own right, by the person whose capital, or energy, or ingenuity, has made him head of the firm, are not in some proportion to be divided among the subordinates of it.

I do not wish, for the moment, to enter into any inquiry as to the just claims of capital, or as to the proportions in which profits ought to be, or are in actually existing firms, divided. I merely take the one assured and essential condition, that a somewhat larger income will be in co-operative firms secured to the subordinates, by the diminution of the income of the chief. And the general tendency of such a system is to increase the facilities of advancement among the subordinates, to stimulate their ambition, to enable them to lay by, if they are provident, more ample and more early provision for declining years; and to form in the end a vast class of persons wholly different from the existing operative—members of society, possessing each a moderate competence, able to procure, therefore, not indeed many of the luxuries, but all the comforts of life; and to devote some leisure to the attainments of liberal education, and to the other objects of free life. On the other hand, by the exact sum which is divided among them, more than their present wages, the fortune of the man who, under the present system, takes all the profits of the business, will be diminished; and the acquirement of large private fortune by regular means, and all the conditions of life belonging to such fortune, will be rendered impossible in the mercantile community.

Now, the magnitude of the social change hereby involved, and the consequent differences in the moral relations between individuals, have not as yet been thought of,—much less estimated,—by any of your writers on commercial subjects, and it is because I do not yet feel

able to grapple with them that I have left untouched, in the books I send you, the question of co-operative labour. When I use the word "co-operation," it is not meant to refer to these new constitutions of firms at all. I use the word in a far wider sense, as opposed, not to masterhood, but to *competition*. I do not mean for instance, by co-operation, that all the master bakers in a town are to give a share of their profits to the men who go out with the bread, but that the masters are not to try to undersell each other, nor seek each to get the other's business, but are all to form one society, selling to the public under a common law of severe penalty for unjust dealing, and at an established price. I do not mean that all bankers' clerks should be partners in the bank, but I do mean that all bankers should be members of a great national body, answerable as a society for all deposits, and that the private business of speculating with other people's money should take another name than that of "banking." And, for final instance, I mean by "co-operation" not only fellowships between trading *firms*, but between trading *nations*, so that it shall no more be thought (as it is now, with ludicrous and vain selfishness) an advantage for one nation to undersell another, and take its occupation away from it, but that the primal and eternal law of vital commerce shall be of all men understood—namely, that every nation is fitted by its character, and the nature of its territories, for some particular employments or manufactures, and that it is the true interest of every other nation to encourage it in such specialty, and by no means to interfere with, but in all ways forward and protect its efforts, ceasing all rivalry with it, so soon as it is strong enough to occupy its proper place. You see, therefore, that the idea of co-operation, in the sense in which I employ it, has hardly yet entered into the minds of political inquirers, and I will not pursue it at present, but return to that system which is beginning to obtain credence and practice among us. This, however, must be in a following letter.

## LETTER II

CO-OPERATION, AS HITHERTO UNDERSTOOD, IS  
PERHAPS NOT EXPEDIENT*February 4, 1867*

LIMITING the inquiry, then, for the present, as proposed in the close of my last letter, to the form of co-operation which is now upon its trial in practice, I would beg of you to observe that the points at issue, in the comparison of this system with that of mastership, are by no means hitherto frankly stated, still less can they as yet be fairly brought to test. For all mastership is not alike in principle, there are just and unjust masterships, and while, on the one hand, there can be no question but that co-operation is better than unjust and tyrannous mastership, there is very great room for doubt whether it be better than a just and benignant mastership.

At present you—every one of you—speak, and act, as if there were only one alternative; namely, between a system in which profits shall be divided in due proportion among all, and the present one, in which the workman is paid the least wages he will take, under the pressure of competition in the labour-market. But an intermediate method is conceivable, a method which appears to me more prudent, and in its ultimate results more just, than the co-operative one. An arrangement may be supposed, and I have good hope also may one day be effected, by which every subordinate shall be paid sufficient and regular wages,\* according to his rank, by which due provision shall be made out of the profits of the business for sick and superannuated workers, and by which the master, *being held responsible, as a minor king or governor, for the conduct as well as the comfort of all those under his rule, shall,*

on that condition, be permitted to retain to his own use the surplus profits of the business which the fact of his being its master may be assumed to prove that he has organised by superior intellect and energy. And I think this principle of regular wage-paying, whether it be in the abstract more just, or not, is at all events the more prudent, for this reason mainly, that in spite of all the cant which is continually talked by cruel, foolish, or designing persons about "the duty of remaining content in the position in which Providence has placed you," there is a root of the very deepest and holiest truth in the saying, which gives to it such power as it still retains, even uttered by unkind and unwise lips, and received into doubtful and embittered hearts.

If, indeed, no effort be made to discover, in the course of their early training, for what services the youths of a nation are individually qualified, nor any care taken to place those who have unquestionably proved their fitness for certain functions, in the offices they could best fulfil,—then, to call the confused wreck of social order and life brought about by malicious collision and competition, an arrangement of Providence, is quite one of the most insolent and wicked ways in which it is possible to take the name of God in vain. But if, at the proper time, some earnest effort be made to place youths, according to their capacities, in the occupations for which they are fitted, I think the system of organisation will be finally found the best, which gives the least encouragement to thoughts of any great future advance in social life.

The healthy sense of progress, which is necessary to the strength and happiness of men, does not consist in the anxiety of a struggle to attain higher place, or rank, but in gradually perfecting the manner, and accomplishing the ends, of the life which we have chosen, or which circumstances have determined for us. Thus, I think the object of a workman's ambition should not be to become a master, but to attain daily more subtle and exemplary skill in

his own craft, to save from his wages enough to enrich and complete his home gradually with more delicate and substantial comforts, and to lay by such store as shall be sufficient for the happy maintenance of his old age (rendering him independent of the help provided for the sick and indigent by the arrangement pre-supposed), and sufficient also for the starting of his children in a rank of life equal to his own. If his wages are not enough to enable him to do this, they are unjustly low, if they are once raised to this adequate standard, I do not think that by the possible increase of his gains under contingencies of trade, or by divisions of profits with his master, he should be enticed into feverish hope of an entire change of condition, and as an almost necessary consequence, pass his days in an anxious discontent with immediate circumstances, and a comfortless scorn of his daily life, for which no subsequent success could indemnify him. And I am the more confident in this belief, because, even supposing a gradual rise in social rank possible for all well-conducted persons, my experience does not lead me to think the elevation itself, when attained, would be conducive to their happiness.

The grounds of this opinion I will give you in a future letter, in the present one, I must pass to a more important point, namely, that if this stability of condition be indeed desirable for those in whom existing circumstances might seem to justify discontent, much more must it be good and desirable for those who already possess everything which can be conceived necessary to happiness. It is the merest insolence of selfishness to preach contentment to a labourer who gets thirty shillings a week, while we suppose an active and plotting covetousness to be meritorious in a man who has three thousand a year. In this, as in all other points of mental discipline, it is the duty of the upper classes to set an example to the lower: and to recommend and justify the restraint of the ambition of their inferiors, chiefly by severe and timely limitation of their



own And, without at present inquiring into the greater or less convenience of the possible methods of accomplishing such an object (every detail in suggestions of this kind necessarily furnishing separate matter of dispute), I will merely state my long-fixed conviction, that one of the most important conditions of a healthful system of social economy would be the restraint of the properties and incomes of the upper classes within certain fixed limits. The temptation to use every energy in the accumulation of wealth being thus removed, another, and a higher ideal of the duties of advanced life would be necessarily created in the national mind, by withdrawal of those who had attained the prescribed limits of wealth from commercial competition, earlier worldly success, and earlier marriage, with all its beneficent moral results, would become possible to the young, while the older men of active intellect, whose sagacity is now lost or warped in the furtherance of their own meanest interests, would be induced unselfishly to occupy themselves in the superintendence of public institutions, or furtherance of public advantage.

And out of this class it would be found natural and prudent always to choose the members of the legislative body of the Commons, and to attach to the order also some peculiar honours, in the possession of which such complacency would be felt as would more than replace the unworthy satisfaction of being supposed richer than others, which to many men is the principal charm of their wealth. And although no law of this purport would ever be imposed on themselves by the actual upper classes, there is no hindrance to its being gradually brought into force from beneath, without any violent or impatient proceedings, and this I will endeavour to show you in my next letter.

## LETTER III

OF TRUE LEGISLATION—THAT EVERY MAN MAY BE  
A LAW TO HIMSELF

February 17, 1867

No, I have not been much worse in health, but I was asked by a friend to look over some work in which you will all be deeply interested one day, so that I could not write again till now. I was the more sorry, because there were several things I wished to note in your last letter, one especially leads me directly to what I in any case was desirous of urging upon you. You say, "In Vol VI of *Frederick the Great* I find a great deal that I feel quite certain, if our Queen or Government could make law, thousands of our English workmen would hail with a shout of joy and gladness." I do not remember to what you especially allude, but whatever the rules you speak of may be, unless there be anything in them contrary to the rights of present English property, why should you care whether the Government makes them law or not? Can you not, you thousands of English workmen, simply make them a law to yourselves, by practising them?

It is now some five or six years since I first had occasion to speak to the members of the London Working Men's College on the subject of Reform, and the substance of what I said to them was this. "You are all agape, my friends, for this mighty privilege of having your opinions represented in Parliament. The concession might be desirable,—at all events courteous,—if only it were quite certain you had got any opinions to represent. But have you? Are you agreed on any single thing you systematically want? Less work and more wages, of course, but how much lessening of work do you suppose is possible?

Do you think the time will ever come for everybody to have *no* work and *all* wages? Or have you yet taken the trouble so much as to think out the nature of the true connection between wages and work, and to determine, even approximately, the real quantity of the one, that can, according to the laws of God and nature, be given for the other, for, rely on it, make what laws you like, that quantity only can you at last get?

“Do you know how many mouths can be fed on an acre of land, or how fast those mouths multiply, and have you considered what is to be done finally with unfeedable mouths? ‘Send them to be fed elsewhere,’ do you say? Have you, then, formed any opinion as to the time at which emigration should begin, or the countries to which it should preferably take place, or the kind of population which should be left at home? Have you planned the permanent state which you would wish England to hold, emigrating over her edges, like a full well, constantly? How full would you have her be of people first, and of what sort of people? Do you want her to be nothing but a large workshop and forge, so that the name of ‘Englishman’ shall be synonymous with ‘ironmonger,’ all over the world, or would you like to keep some of your lords and landed gentry still, and a few green fields and trees?

“You know well enough that there is not one of these questions, I do not say which you can answer, but which you have ever *thought* of answering, and yet you want to have voices in Parliament! Your voices are not worth a rat’s squeak, either in Parliament or out of it, till you have some ideas to utter with them, and when you have the thoughts, you will not want to utter them, for you will see that your way to the fulfilling of them does not lie through speech. You think such matters need debating about? By all means debate about them; but debate among yourselves, and with such honest helpers of your thoughts as you can find, if that way you cannot get at the truth, do you suppose you could get at it sooner in the

House of Commons, where the only aim of many of the members would be to refute every word uttered in your favour, and where the settlement of any question whatever depends merely on the perturbations of the balance of conflicting interests?"

That was, in main particulars, what I then said to the men of the Working Men's College, and in this recurrent agitation about Reform, that is what I would steadfastly say again. Do you think it is only under the lacquered splendours of Westminster,—you working men of England,—that your affairs can be rationally talked over? You have perfect liberty and power to talk over, and establish for yourselves, whatever laws you please, so long as you do not interfere with other people's liberties or properties. Elect a parliament of your own. Choose the best men among you, the best at least you can find, by whatever system of election you think likeliest to secure such desirable result. Invite trustworthy persons of other classes to join your council, appoint time and place for its stated sittings, and let this parliament, chosen after your own hearts, deliberate on the possible modes of the regulation of industry, and advisabest schemes for helpful discipline of life, and so lay before you the best laws they can devise, which such of you as were wise might submit to, and teach their children to obey. And if any of the laws thus determined appeared to be inconsistent with the present circumstances or customs of trade, do not make a noise about them, nor try to enforce them suddenly on others, nor embroider them on flags, nor call meetings in parks about them, in spite of railings and police; but keep them in your thoughts and sight, as objects of patient purpose, and future achievement by peaceful strength.

For you need not think that even if you obtained a majority of representatives in the existing parliament, you could immediately compel any system of business, broadly contrary to that now established by custom. If you could pass laws to-morrow, wholly favourable to yourselves,

as you might think, because unfavourable to your masters, and to the upper classes of society,—the only result would be that the riches of the country would at once leave it, and you would perish in riot and famine. Be assured that no great change for the better can ever be easily accomplished, nor quickly, nor by impulsive, ill-regulated effort, nor by bad men, nor even by good men, without much suffering. The suffering must, indeed, come, one way or another, in all greatly critical periods, the only question, for us, is whether we will reach our ends (if we ever reach them) through a chain of involuntary miseries, many of them useless, and all ignoble, or whether we will know the worst at once, and deal with it by the wisely sharp methods of God-speed courage.

This, I repeat to you, it is wholly in your own power to do, but it is in your power on one condition only, that of steadfast truth to yourselves, and to all men. If there is not, in the sum of it, honesty enough among you to teach you to frame, and strengthen you to obey, *just* laws of trade, there is no hope left for you. No political constitution can ennoble knaves, no privileges can assist them, no possessions enrich them. Their gains are occult curses, comfortless loss their truest blessing, failure and pain Nature's only mercy to them. Look to it, therefore, first, that you get some wholesome honesty for the foundation of all things. Without the resolution in your hearts to do good work, so long as your right hands have motion in them, and to do it whether the issue be that you die or live, no life worthy the name will ever be possible to you, while, in once forming the resolution that your work is to be well done, life is really won, here and for ever. And to make your children capable of such resolution, is the beginning of all true education, of which I have more to say in a future letter.

## LETTER IV

## THE EXPENSES FOR ART AND FOR WAR

*February 19, 1867*

IN the *Pall Mall Gazette* of yesterday, second column of second page, you will find, close to each other, two sentences which bear closely on matters in hand. The first of these is the statement, that in the debate on the grant for the Blacas collection, "Mr. Bernal Osborne got an assenting cheer, when he said that 'whenever science and art were mentioned it was a sign to look after the national pockets.' " I want you to notice this fact, *i.e.* (the debate in question being on a *total* grant of £164,000, of which £48,000 only were truly for art's sake, and the rest for shop's sake), in illustration of a passage in my *Sesame and Lilies*,<sup>1</sup> to which I shall have again to refer you, with some further comments, in the sequel of these letters. The second passage is to the effect that "The Trades' Union Bill was read a second time, after a claim from Mr Hadfield, Mr Osborne, and Mr. Samuelson, to admit working men into the commission, to which Mr. Watkin answered 'that the working men's friend was too conspicuous in the body,' and Mr Roebuck, 'that when a butcher was tried for murder it was not necessary to have butchers on the jury.' "

Note this second passage with respect to what I said in my last letter, as to the impossibility of the laws of work being investigated in the House of Commons. What admixture of elements, think you, would avail to obtain so much as decent hearing (how should we then speak of impartial judgment?) of the cause of working men, in an assembly which permits to one of its principal members

<sup>1</sup> Appendix I

this insolent discourtesy of language, in dealing with a preliminary question of the highest importance, and permits it as so far expressive of the whole colour and tone of its own thoughts, that the sentence is quoted by one of the most temperate and accurate of our daily journals, as representing the total answer of the opposite side in the debate? No, be assured you can do nothing yet at Westminster. You must have your own parliament, and if you cannot detect enough honesty among you to constitute a justly-minded one, for the present matters must take their course, and that will be, yet awhile, to the worse.

I meant to have continued this subject, but I see two other statements in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of to-day, with which, and a single remark upon them, I think it will be well to close my present letter.

1 "The total sum asked for in the army estimates, published this morning, is £14,752,200, being an increase of £412,000 over the previous year."

2 "Yesterday the annual account of the navy receipts and expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1866, was issued from the Admiralty. The expenditure was £10,268,215 7s."

Omitting the seven shillings, and even the odd hundred-thousands of pounds, the net annual expenditure for army and navy appears to be twenty-four millions.

The "grant in science and art," two-thirds of which was not in reality for either, but for amusement and shop interests in the Paris Exhibition—the grant which the House of Commons feels to be indicative of general danger to the national pockets—is, as above stated, £164,000. Now, I believe the three additional ciphers which turn thousands into millions produce on the intelligent English mind usually, the effect of—three ciphers. But calculate the proportion of these two sums, and then imagine to yourself the beautiful state of rationality of any private gentleman, who, having regretfully spent

£164 on pictures for his walls, paid willingly £24,000 annually to the policemen who looked after his shutters! You practical English!—will you ever unbar the shutters of your brains, and hang a picture or two in *those* state-chambers?



## LETTER V

THE CORRUPTION OF MODERN PLEASURE—(COVENT  
GARDEN PANTOMIME)*February 25, 1867*

THERE is this great advantage in the writing real letters, that the direct correspondence is a sufficient reason for saying, in or out of order, everything that the chances of the day bring into one's head, in connection with the matter in hand, and as such things very usually go out of one's head again, after they get tired of their lodging, they would otherwise never get said at all. And thus to-day, quite out of order, but in very close connection with another part of our subject, I am going to tell you what I was thinking on Friday evening last, in Covent Garden Theatre, as I was looking, and not laughing, at the pantomime of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*.

When you begin seriously to consider the question referred to in my second letter, of the essential, and in the outcome inviolable, connection between quantity of wages, and quantity of work, you will see that "wages" in the full sense don't mean "pay" merely, but the reward, whatever it may be, of pleasure as well as profit, and of various other advantages, which a man is meant by Providence to get during life, for work well done. Even limiting the idea to "pay," the question is not so much what quantity of coin you get, as—what you can get for it when you have it. Whether a shilling a day be good pay or not, depends wholly on what a "shilling's worth" is, that is to say, what quantity of the things you want may be had for a shilling. And that again depends on what you do want, and a great deal more than that depends, besides, on "what you want." If you want only drink, and

foul clothes, such and such pay may be enough for you, if you want good meat and good clothes, you must have larger wage, if clean rooms and fresh air, larger still, and so on. You say, perhaps, "every one wants these better things." So far from that, a wholesome taste for cleanliness and fresh air is one of the final attainments of humanity. There are now not many European gentlemen, even in the highest classes, who have a pure and right love of fresh air. They would put the filth of tobacco even into the first breeze of a May morning.

But there are better things even than these, which one may want. Grant, that one has good food, clothes, lodging, and breathing, is that all the pay one ought to have for one's work? Wholesome means of existence, and nothing more? Enough, perhaps, you think, if everybody could get these. It may be so, I will not, at this moment, dispute it, nevertheless, I will boldly say that you should sometimes want more than these, and for one of many things more, you should want occasionally to be amused!

You know, the upper classes, most of them, want to be amused all day long. They think

"One moment *unamused* a misery  
Not made for feeble men"

Perhaps you have been in the habit of despising them for this, and thinking how much worthier and nobler it was to work all day, and care at night only for food and rest, than to do no useful thing all day, eat unearned food, and spend the evening, as the morning, in "change of follies and relays of joy." No, my good friend, that is one of the fatallest deceptions. It is not a noble thing, in sum and issue of it, not to care to be amused. It is indeed a far higher *moral* state, but it is a much lower *creature* state, than that of the upper classes.

Yonder poor horse, calm slave in daily chains at the railroad siding, who drags the detached rear of the train to the front again, and slips aside so deftly as the buffers

meet, and, within eighteen inches of death every ten minutes, fulfils his dexterous and changeless duty all day long, content for eternal reward with his night's rest, and his champed mouthful of hay,—anything more earnestly moral and beautiful one cannot image—I never see the creature without a kind of worship. And yonder musician, who used the greatest power which, (in the art he knew) the Father of spirits ever yet breathed into the clay of this world,—who used it, I say, to follow and fit with perfect sound the words of the *Zauberflöte* and of *Don Giovanni*,—basest and most monstrous of conceivable human words and subjects of thought—for the future “amusement” of his race!—No such spectacle of unconscious (and in that unconsciousness all the more fearful) moral degradation of the highest faculty to the lowest purpose can be found in history. But Mozart is nevertheless a nobler creature than the horse at the siding, nor would it be the least nearer the purpose of his Maker that he, and all his frivolous audiences, should evade the degradation of the profitless piping, only by living, like horses, in daily physical labour for daily bread.

There are three things to which man is born<sup>2</sup>—labour, and sorrow, and joy. Each of these three things has its baseness and its nobleness. There is base labour, and noble labour. There is base sorrow, and noble sorrow. There is base joy, and noble joy. But you must not think to avoid the corruption of these things by doing without the things themselves. Nor can any life be right that has not all three. Labour without joy is base. Labour without sorrow is base. Sorrow without labour is base. Joy without labour is base.

I dare say you think I am a long time in coming to the pantomime, I am not ready to come to it yet in due course, for we ought to go and see the Japanese jugglers first, in order to let me fully explain to you what I mean.

<sup>2</sup> I ask the reader's thoughtful attention to this paragraph, on which much of what else I have to say depends.

But I can't write much more to-day, so I shall merely tell you what part of the play set me thinking of all this, and leave you to consider of it yourself, till I can send you another letter. The pantomime was, as I said, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. The forty thieves were girls. The forty thieves had forty companions, who were girls. The forty thieves and their forty companions were in some way mixed up with about four hundred and forty fairies, who were girls. There was an Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, in which the Oxford and Cambridge men were girls. There was a transformation scene, with a forest, in which the flowers were girls, and a chandelier, in which the lamps were girls, and a great rainbow, which was all of girls.

Mingled incongruously with all these seraphic, and, as far as my boyish experience extends, novel, elements of pantomime, there were yet some of its old and fast-expiring elements. There were, in speciality, two thoroughly good pantomime actors—Mr W H Payne and Mr Frederick Payne. All that these two did, was done admirably. There were two subordinate actors, who played, subordinately well, the fore and hind legs of a donkey. And there was a little actress, of whom I have chiefly to speak, who played exquisitely the little part she had to play. The scene in which she appeared was the only one in the whole pantomime in which there was any dramatic effort, or, with a few rare exceptions, any dramatic possibility. It was the home scene, in which Ali Baba's wife, on washing day, is called upon by butcher, baker, and milkman, with unpaid bills, and in the extremity of her distress hears her husband's knock at the door, and opens it for him to drive in his donkey, laden with gold. The children, who have been beaten instead of getting breakfast, presently share in the raptures of their father and mother, and the little lady I spoke of—eight or nine years old—dances a *pas-de-deux* with the donkey.

She did it beautifully and simply, as a child ought to dance. She was not an infant prodigy, there was no evi-

dence, in the finish or strength of her motion, that she had been put to continual torture through half her eight or nine years. She did nothing more than any child, well taught, but painlessly, might easily do. She caricatured no older person,—attempted no curious or fantastic skill. She was dressed decently,—she moved decently,—she looked and behaved innocently,—and she danced her joyful dance with perfect grace, spirit, sweetness, and self-forgetfulness. And through all the vast theatre, full of English fathers and mothers and children, there was not one hand lifted to give her sign of praise but mine.

Presently after this, came on the forty thieves, who, as I told you, were girls, and, there being no thieving to be presently done, and time hanging heavy on their hands, arms, and legs, the forty thief-girls proceeded to light forty cigars. Whereupon the British public gave them a round of applause. Whereupon I fell a-thinking, and saw little more of the piece, except as an ugly and disturbing dream.

## LETTER VI

THE CORRUPTION OF MODERN PLEASURE—(THE  
JAPANESE JUGGLERS)*February 28, 1867*

I HAVE your pleasant letter with references to Frederick. I will look at them carefully.<sup>3</sup> Mr Carlyle himself will be pleased to hear this letter when he comes home. I heard from him last week at Mentone. He is well, and glad of the light and calm of Italy. I must get back to the evil light, and uncalm, of the places I was taking you through.

(Parenthetically, did you see the article in *The Times* of yesterday on bribery, and the conclusion of the commission—"No one sold any opinions, for no one had any opinions to sell")

Both on Thursday and Friday last I had been tormented by many things, and wanted to disturb my course of thought any way I could. I have told you what entertainment I got on Friday, first, for it was then that I began meditating over these letters, let me tell you now what entertainment I found on Thursday.

You may have heard that a company of Japanese jugglers has come over to exhibit in London. There has long been an increasing interest in Japanese art, which has been very harmful to many of our own painters, and I greatly desired to see what these people were, and what they did. Well, I have seen Blondin, and various English and French circus work, but never yet anything that surprised me so much as one of these men's exercises on a suspended pole. Its special character was a close approximation to the action and power of the monkey, even to the prehensile power in the foot, so that I asked a sculptor-friend who

<sup>3</sup> Appendix II

sat in front of me, whether he thought such a grasp could be acquired by practice, or indicated difference in race. He said he thought it might be got by practice. There was also much inconceivably dexterous work in spinning of tops,—making them pass in balanced motion along the edge of a sword, and along a level string, and the like,—the father performing in the presence of his two children, who encouraged him continually with short, sharp cries, like those of animals. Then there was some fairly good sleight-of-hand juggling of little interest, ending with a dance by the juggler, first as an animal, and then as a goblin. Now, there was this great difference between the Japanese masks used in this dance and our common pantomime masks for beasts and demons,—that our English masks are only stupidly and loathsomely ugly, by exaggeration of feature, or of defect of feature. But the Japanese masks (like the frequent monsters of Japanese art) were inventively frightful, like fearful dreams, and whatever power it is that acts on human minds, enabling them to invent such, appears to me not only to deserve the term “demoniacal,” as the only word expressive of its character, but to be logically capable of no other definition.

The impression, therefore, produced upon me by the whole scene, was that of being in the presence of human creatures of a partially inferior race, but not without great human gentleness, domestic affection, and ingenious intellect, who were, nevertheless, as a nation, afflicted by an evil spirit, and driven by it to recreate themselves in achieving, or beholding the achievement, through years of patience, of a certain correspondence with the nature of the lower animals.

These, then, were the two forms of diversion or recreation of my mind possible to me, in two days when I needed such help, in this metropolis of England. I might, as a rich man, have had better music, if I had so chosen, though, even so, not rational or helpful, but a poor man could only have these, or worse than these, if he cared for any

manner of spectacle (I am not at present, observe, speaking of pure acting, which is a study, and recreative only as a noble book is, but of means of *mere* amusement )

Now, lastly, in illustration of the effect of these and other such "amusements," and of the desire to obtain them, on the minds of our youth, read *The Times* correspondent's letter from Paris, in the tenth page of the paper, to-day, <sup>4</sup> and that will be quite enough for you to read, for the present, I believe

<sup>4</sup> Appendix III



## LETTER VII

OF THE VARIOUS EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONAL  
FESTIVITY*March 4, 1867*

THE subject which I want to bring before you is now branched, and, worse than branched, reticulated, in so many directions, that I hardly know which shoot of it to trace, or which knot to lay hold of first

I had intended to return to those Japanese jugglers, after a visit to a theatre in Paris, but I had better, perhaps, at once tell you the piece of the performance which, in connection with the scene in the English pantomime, bears most on matters in hand

It was also a dance by a little girl—though one older than Ali Baba's daughter (I suppose a girl of twelve or fourteen) A dance, so called, which consisted only in a series of short, sharp contractions and jerks of the body and limbs, resulting in attitudes of distorted and quaint ugliness, such as might be produced in a puppet by sharp twitching of strings at its joints these movements being made to the sound of two instruments, which between them accomplished only a quick vibratory beating and strumming, in nearly the time of a hearth-cricket's song, but much harsher, and of course louder, and without any sweetness, only in the monotony and unintended aimless construction of it, reminding one of various other insects and reptile cries or warnings, partly of the cicada's hiss, partly of the little melancholy German frog which says "Mu, mu, mu," all summer-day long, with its nose out of the pools by Dresden and Leipsic, and partly of the deadened quivering and intense continuousness of the alarm of the rattlesnake

While this was going on, there was a Bible text repeating itself over and over again in my head, whether I would or no—"And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances" To which text and some others, I shall ask your attention presently, but I must go to Paris first

Not at once, however, to the theatre, but to a book-seller's shop, No 4, Rue Voltaire, where, in the year 1858, was published the fifth edition of Balzac's *Contes Drolatiques*, illustrated by 425 designs by Gustave Doré

Both texts and illustrations are as powerful as it is ever in the nature of evil things to be—(there is no *final* strength but in rightness) Nothing more witty, nor more inventively horrible, has yet been produced in the evil literature, or by the evil art, of man· nor can I conceive it possible to go beyond either in their specialities of corruption The text is full of blasphemies, subtle, tremendous, hideous in shamelessness, some put into the mouths of priests, the illustrations are, in a word, one continuous revelry in the most loathsome and monstrous aspects of death and sin, enlarged into fantastic ghastliness of caricature, as if seen through the distortion and trembling of the hot smoke of the mouth of hell. Take this following for a general type of what they seek in death· one of the most laboured designs is of a man cut in two, downwards, by the sweep of a sword—one half of him falls towards the spectator; the other half is elaborately drawn in its section—giving the profile of the divided nose and lips, cleft jaw—breast—and entrails, and this is done with farther pollution and horror of intent in the circumstances, which I do not choose to describe—still less some other of the designs which seek for fantastic extreme of sin, as this for the utmost horror of death, but of all the 425, there is not one which does not violate every instinct of decency and law of virtue or life, written in the human soul

Now, my friend, among the many "Signs of the Times"

the production of a book like this is a significant one, but it becomes more significant still when connected with the farther fact, that M. Gustave Doré, the designer of this series of plates, has just been received with loud acclaim by the British Evangelical Public, as the fittest and most able person whom they could at present find to illustrate, to their minds, and recommend with graciousness, of sacred art, their hitherto unadorned Bible for them.

Of which Bible, and of the use we at present make of it in England, having a grave word or two to say in my next letter (preparatory to the examination of that verse which haunted me through the Japanese juggling, and of some others also), I leave you first this sign of the public esteem of it to consider at your leisure.

## LETTER VIII

THE FOUR POSSIBLE THEORIES RESPECTING THE  
AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

March 7, 1867

I HAVE your yesterday's letter, but must not allow myself to be diverted from the business in hand for this once, for it is the most important of which I have to write to you

You must have seen long ago that the essential difference between the political economy I am trying to teach, and the popular science, is, that mine is based on *presumably attainable honesty* in men, and conceivable respect in them for the interest of others, while the popular science founds itself wholly on their supposed constant regard for their own, and on their honesty only so far as thereby likely to be secured

It becomes, therefore, for me, and for all who believe anything I say, a great primal question on what this presumably attainable honesty is to be based

"Is it to be based on religion?" you may ask. "Are we to be honest for fear of losing heaven if we are dishonest, or (to put it as generously as we may) for fear of displeasing God? Or, are we to be honest on speculation, because honesty is the best policy, and to invest in virtue as in an undepreciable stock?"

And my answer is—not in any hesitating or diffident way (and you know, my friend, that whatever people may say of me, I often do speak diffidently, though, when I am diffident of things, I like to avoid speaking of them, if it may be, but here I say with no shadow of doubt)—your honesty is *not* to be based either on religion or policy. Both your religion and policy must be based on *it*. Your honesty must be based, as the sun is, in vacant heaven,

poised, as the lights in the firmament, which have rule over the day and over the night If you ask why you are to be honest—you are, in the question itself, dishonoured “Because you are a man,” is the only answer, and therefore I said in a former letter that to make your children *capable of honesty* is the beginning of education Make them men first, and religious men afterwards, and all will be sound, but a knave’s religion is always the rottenest thing about him

It is not, therefore, because I am endeavouring to lay down a foundation of religious concrete, on which to build piers of policy, that you so often find me quoting Bible texts in defence of this or that principle or assertion But the fact that such references are an offence, as I know them to be, to many of the readers of these political essays, is one among many others, which I would desire you to reflect upon (whether you are yourself one of the offended or not) as expressive of the singular position which the mind of the British public has at present taken with respect to its worshipped Book The positions, honestly tenable, before I use any more of its texts, I must try to define for you

All the theories possible to theological disputants respecting the Bible are resolvable into four, and four only

1 The first is that of the comparatively illiterate modern religious world, namely, that every word of the book known to them as “The Bible” was dictated by the Supreme Being, and is in every syllable of it His “Word”

This theory is of course tenable, though honestly, yet by no ordinarily well-educated person

2 The second theory is, that although admitting verbal error, the substance of the whole collection of books called the Bible is absolutely true, and furnished to man by Divine inspiration of the speakers and writers of it, and that every one who honestly and prayerfully seeks for such truth in it as is necessary for salvation, will infallibly find it there

This theory is that held by most of our good and upright clergymen, and the better class of the professedly religious laity

3 The third theory is that the group of books which we call the Bible were neither written nor collected under any Divine guidance, securing them from substantial error, and that they contain, like all other human writings, false statements mixed with true, and erring thoughts mixed with just thoughts; but that they nevertheless relate, on the whole, faithfully, the dealings of the one God with the first races of man, and His dealings with them in after-time through Christ; that they record true miracles, and bear true witness to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

This is a theory held by many of the active leaders of modern thought in England

4 The fourth, and last possible theory is that the mass of religious Scripture contains merely the best efforts which we hitherto know to have been made by any of the races of men towards the discovery of some relations with the spiritual world, that they are only trustworthy as expressions of the enthusiastic visions or beliefs of earnest men oppressed by the world's darkness and have no more authoritative claim on our faith than the religious speculations and histories of the Egyptians, Greeks, Persians, and Indians, but are, in common with all these, to be reverently studied, as containing the best wisdom which human intellect, earnestly seeking for help from God, has hitherto been able to gather between birth and death

This has been, for the last half century, the theory of the leading scholars and thinkers of Europe

There is yet indeed one farther condition of incredulity attainable, and sorrowfully attained, by many men of powerful intellect—the incredulity, namely, of inspiration in any sense, or of help given by any Divine power to the thoughts of men But this form of infidelity merely indicates a natural incapacity for receiving certain emotions,

though many honest and good men belong to this insentient class

The educated men, therefore, who may be seriously appealed to, in these days, on questions of moral responsibility, as modified by Scripture, are broadly divisible into three classes, severally holding the three last theories above stated

Now, whatever power a passage from the statedly authoritative portions of the Bible may have over the mind of a person holding the fourth theory, it will have a proportionately greater over that of persons holding the third, or the second. I, therefore, always imagine myself speaking to the fourth class of theorists. If I can persuade or influence *them*, I am logically sure of the others. I say "logically," for in the actual fact, strange as it may seem, no persons are so little likely to submit to a passage of Scripture not to their liking, as those who are most positive on the subject of its general inspiration

Addressing, then, this fourth class of thinkers, I would say to them, when asking them to enter on any subject of importance to national morals, or conduct, "This book, which has been the accepted guide of the moral intelligence of Europe for some 1500 years, enforces certain simple laws of human conduct which you know have also been agreed upon in every main point by all the religious and by all the greatest profane writers, of every age and country. This book primarily forbids pride, lasciviousness, and covetousness, and you know that all great thinkers, in every nation of mankind, have similarly forbade these mortal vices. This book enjoins truth, temperance, charity, and equity, and you know that every great Egyptian, Greek, and Indian, enjoins these also. You know besides, that through all the mysteries of human fate and history, this one great law of fate is written on the walls of cities, or in their dust,—written in letters of light, and letters of blood,—that where truth, temperance, and equity have been preserved, all strength, and peace, and joy have

been preserved also,—that where lying, lasciviousness, and covetousness have been practised, there has followed an infallible, and for centuries, irrecoverable, ruin And you know, lastly, that the observance of this common law of righteousness, commending itself to all the pure instincts of men, and fruitful in their temporal good, is by the religious writers of every nation, and chiefly in this venerated Scripture of ours, connected with some distinct hope of better life, and righteousness, to come

“Let it not then offend you if, deducing principles of action first from the laws and facts of nature, I nevertheless fortify them also by appliance of the precepts, or suggestive and probable teachings of this Book, of which the authority is over many around you, more distinctly than over you, and which, confessing to be divine, *they*, at least, can only disobey at their moral peril.”

On these grounds, and in this temper, I am in the habit of appealing to passages of Scripture in my writings on political economy, and in this temper I will ask you to consider with me some conclusions which appear to me derivable from that text about Miriam, which haunted me through the jugglery, and from certain others.



## LETTER IX

THE USE OF MUSIC AND DANCING UNDER THE JEWISH  
THEOCRACY, COMPARED WITH THEIR USE BY THE  
MODERN FRENCH*March 10, 1867*

HAVING, I hope, made you now clearly understand with what feeling I would use the authority of the book which the British public, professing to consider sacred, have lately adorned for themselves with the work of the boldest violator of the instincts of human honour and decency known yet in art-history, I will pursue by the help of that verse about Miriam, and some others, the subject which occupied my mind at both theatres, and to which, though in so apparently desultory manner, I have been nevertheless very earnestly endeavouring to lead you

The going forth of the women of Israel after Miriam, with timbrels and with dances, was, as you doubtless remember, their expression of passionate triumph and thankfulness, after the full accomplishment of their deliverance from the Egyptians. That deliverance had been by the utter death of their enemies, and accompanied by stupendous miracle, no human creatures could in an hour of triumph be surrounded by circumstances more solemn. I am not going to try to excite your feelings about them. Consider only for yourself what that seeing of the Egyptians "dead upon the sea-shore" meant to every soul that saw it. And then reflect that these intense emotions of mingled horror, triumph, and gratitude were expressed, in the visible presence of the Deity, by music and dancing. If you answer that you do not believe the Egyptians so perished, or that God ever appeared in a pillar of cloud, I reply, "Be it so—believe or disbelieve, as you choose,—

This is yet assuredly the fact, that the author of the poem or fable of the Exodus supposed that under such circumstances of Divine interposition as he had invented, the triumph of the Israelitish women would have been, and ought to have been, under the direction of a prophetess, expressed by music and dancing "

Nor was it possible that he should think otherwise, at whatever period he wrote, both music and dancing being among all great ancient nations an appointed and very principal part of the worship of the gods

And that very theatrical entertainment at which I sate thinking over these things for you—that pantomime, which depended throughout for its success on an appeal to the vices of the lower London populace, was in itself nothing but a corrupt remnant of the religious ceremonies which guided the most serious faiths of the Greek mind, and laid the foundation of their gravest moral and didactic—more forcibly so because at the same time dramatic—literature. Returning to the Jewish history, you find soon afterwards this enthusiastic religious dance and song employed in their more common and habitual manner, in the idolatries under Sinai, but beautifully again and tenderly, after the triumph of Jephthah, "And behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances " Again, still more notably at the triumph of David with Saul, "The women came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing, to meet King Saul with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music." And you have this joyful song and dance of the virgins of Israel not only incidentally alluded to in the most solemn passages of Hebrew religious poetry (as in Psalm lxviii 24, 25, and Psalm cxlix 2, 3), but approved, and the restoration of it promised as a sign of God's perfect blessing, most earnestly by the saddest of the Hebrew prophets, and in one of the most beautiful of all his sayings

"The Lord hath appeared of old unto me saying, 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love. Therefore,

with loving-kindness have I drawn thee—I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O Virgin of Israel, thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances with them that make merry' ” (Jerem xxxi 3, 4, and compare v 13) And finally, you have in two of quite the most important passages in the whole series of Scripture (one in the Old Testament, one in the New), the rejoicing in the repentance from, and remission of sins, expressed by means of music and dancing, namely, in the rapturous dancing of David before the returning ark, and in the joy of the Father's household at the repentance of the prodigal son

I could put all this much better and more convincingly before you, if I were able to take any pains in writing at present, but I am not, as I told you, being weary and ill, neither do I much care now to use what, in the very truth, are but tricks of literary art, in dealing with this so grave subject You see I write you my letter straightforward, and let you see all my scratchings out and puttings in, and if the way I say things shocks you, or any other reader of these letters, I cannot help it, this only I know, that what I tell you is true, and written more earnestly than anything I ever wrote with my best literary care, and that you will find it useful to think upon, however it be said Now, therefore, to draw towards our conclusion Supposing the Bible inspired, in any of the senses above defined, you have in these passages a positively Divine authority for the use of song and dance, as a means of religious service, and expression of national thanksgiving Supposing it not inspired, you have (taking the passages for as slightly authoritative as you choose) record in them, nevertheless, of a state of mind in a great nation, producing the most beautiful religious poetry and perfect moral law hitherto known to us, yet only expressible by them, to the fulfilment of their joyful passion, by means of processional dance and choral song

Now I want you to contrast this state of religious rap-

ture with some of our modern phases of mind in parallel circumstances. You see that the promise of Jeremiah's, "Thou shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry," is immediately followed by this, "Thou shalt yet *plant vines* upon the mountains of Samaria " And again, at the yearly feast of the Lord in Shiloh, the dancing of the virgins was in the midst of the vineyards (Judges xxi. 21), the feast of the vintage being in the south, as our harvest-home in the north, a peculiar occasion of joy and thanksgiving I happened to pass the autumn of 1863 in one of the great vine districts of Switzerland, under the slopes of the outlying branch of the Jura which limits the arable plain of the Canton Zurich, some fifteen miles north of Zurich itself That city has always been a renowned stronghold of Swiss Protestantism, next in importance only to Geneva, and its evangelical zeal for the conversion of the Catholics of Uri, and endeavours to bring about that spiritual result by stopping the supplies of salt they needed to make their cheeses with, brought on (the Uri men reading their Matt v. 13 in a different sense) the battle of Keppel, and the death of the reformer, Zwinglius The town itself shows the most gratifying signs of progress in all the modern arts and sciences of life It is nearly as black as Newcastle—has a railroad station larger than the London terminus of the Chatham and Dover—fouls the stream of the Limmat as soon as it issues from the lake, so that you might even venture to compare the formerly simple and innocent Swiss river (I remember it thirty years ago—a current of pale green crystal) with the highly educated English streams of Weare or Tyne, and, finally, has as many French prints of dissolute tendency in its principal shop windows, as if they had the privilege of opening on the Parisian Boulevards I was somewhat anxious to see what species of thanksgiving or exultation would be expressed, at *their* vintage, by the peasantry in the neighbourhood of this much enlightened evangelical and commercial society It consisted in two ceremonies

only During the day, the servants of the farms where the grapes had been gathered, collected in knots about the vineyards, and slowly fired horse-pistols, from morning to evening At night they got drunk, and staggered up and down the hill paths, uttering at short intervals yells and shrieks, differing only from the howling of wild animals by a certain intended and insolent discordance, only attainable by the malignity of debased human creatures I must not do the injustice to the Zurich peasantry of implying that this manner of festivity is peculiar to them A year before, in 1862, I had formed the intention of living some years in the neighbourhood of Geneva, and had established myself experimentally on the eastern slope of the Mont Salève, but I was forced to abandon my purpose at last, because I could not endure the rabid howling, on Sunday evenings, of the holiday-makers who came out from Geneva to get drunk in the mountain village By the way, your last letter, with its extracts about our traffic in gin, is very valuable I will come to that part of the business in a little while Meantime, my friend, note this, respecting what I have told you, that in the very centre of Europe, in a country which is visited for their chief pleasure by the most refined and thoughtful persons among all Christian nations—a country made by God's hand the most beautiful in the temperate regions of the earth, and inhabited by a race once capable of the sternest patriotism and simplest purity of life, your modern religion, in the very stronghold of it, has reduced the song and dance of ancient virginal thanksgiving to the howlings and staggerings of men betraying, in intoxication, a nature sunk more than half-way towards the beasts, and you will begin to understand why the Bible should have been "illustrated" by Gustave Doré

One word more is needful, though this letter is long already The peculiar ghastliness of this Swiss mode of festivity is in its utter failure of joy, the paralysis and helplessness of a vice in which there is neither pleasure,

nor art. But we are not, throughout Europe, wholly thus. There is such a thing, yet, as rapturous song and dance among us, though not indicative by any means of joy over repentant sinners. You must come back to Paris with me again. I had an evening to spare there, last summer, for investigation of theatres, and as there was nothing at any of them that I cared much about seeing, I asked a *valet-de-place* at Meurice's, what people were generally going to. He said, "All the English went to see the *Lanterne Magique*." I do not care to tell you what general entertainment I received in following, for once, the lead of my countrymen, but it closed with the representation of the characteristic dancing of all ages of the world, and the dance given as characteristic of modern time was the Cancan, which you will see alluded to in the extract given in the note at page 36 of *Sesame and Lilies*. "The ball terminated with a Devilish Chain and a Cancan of Hell, at seven in the morning." It was led by four principal dancers (who have since appeared in London in the *Huguenot Captain*), and it is many years since I have seen such perfect dancing, as far as finish and accuracy of art and fulness of animal power and fire are concerned. Nothing could be better done, in its own evil way, the object of the dance throughout being to express in every gesture the wildest fury of insolence and vicious passions possible to human creatures. So that you see, though for the present we find ourselves utterly incapable of a rapture of gladness or thanksgiving, the dance which is presented as characteristic of modern civilisation is still rapturous enough—but it is with rapture of blasphemy. Now, just read the preface to *Sesame and Lilies*,<sup>5</sup> and I will try to bring all these broken threads into some warp and woof, in my next two letters—if I cannot in one.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix XI, p. 148.

## LETTER X

THE MEANING, AND ACTUAL OPERATION, OF SATANIC  
OR DEMONIAL INFLUENCE*March 16, 1867*

I AM afraid my weaving, after all, will be but rough work—and many ends of threads ill-knotted—but you will see there's a pattern at last, meant by them all

You may gather from the facts given you in my last letter, that as the expression of true and holy gladness was in old time stately offered up by men for a part of worship to God their Father—so the expression of false and unholy gladness is in modern times, with as much distinctness and plainness, asserted by them openly to be offered to another spirit “Chain of the Devil, and Cancan of Hell” being the names assigned to these modern forms of joyous procession

Now, you know that among the best and wisest of our present religious teachers, there is a gradual tendency to disbelieve, and to preach their disbelief, in the commonly received ideas of the Devil, and of his place, and his work. While, among some of our equally well-meaning, but far less wise, religious teachers, there is, in consequence, a panic spreading, in anticipation of the moral dangers which must follow on the loss of the help of the Devil One of the last appearances in public of the author of the *Christian Year* was at a conclave of clergymen assembled in defence of faith in damnation The sense of the meeting generally was, that there *must* be such a place as hell, because no one would ever behave decently upon earth unless they were kept in wholesome fear of the fires beneath it and Mr Keble especially insisting on this view, related a story of an old woman, who had a wicked son, and who having

lately heard with horror of the teaching of Mr. Maurice and others, exclaimed pathetically, "My son is bad enough as it is, and if he were not afraid of hell, what would become of him!" (I write from memory, and cannot answer for the words, but I can for their purport)

Now, my friend, I am afraid that I must incur the charge of such presumption as may be involved in variance from *both* these systems of teaching

I do not merely *believe* there is such a place as hell. I *know* there is such a place, and I know also that when men have got to the point of believing virtue impossible but through dread of it, they have got *into* it

I mean, that according to the distinctness with which they hold such a creed, the stain of nether fire has passed upon them. In the depth of his heart Mr. Keble could not have entertained the thought for an instant, and I believe it was only as a conspicuous sign to the religious world of the state into which they were sinking, that this creed, possible in its sincerity only to the basest of them, was nevertheless appointed to be uttered by the lips of the most tender, gracious, and beloved of their teachers.

"Virtue impossible but for fear of hell"—a lofty creed for your English youth—and a holy one! And yet, my friend, there was something of right in the terrors of this clerical conclave. For, though you should assuredly be able to hold your own in the straight ways of God, without always believing that the Devil is at your side, it is a state of mind much to be dreaded, that you should not *know* the Devil, when you *see* him there. For the probability is that when you do see him, the way you are walking in is not one of God's ways at all, but is leading you into quite other neighbourhoods than His. On His way, indeed, you may often, like Albert Durer's Knight, see the Fiend behind you, but you will find that he drops always farther and farther behind, whereas if he jogs with you at your side, it is probably one of his own by-paths you are got on. And, in any case, it is a highly desirable matter that you



should know him when you set eyes on him, which we are very far from doing in these days, having convinced ourselves that the graminivorous form of him, with horn and tail, is extant no longer. But in fearful truth, the Presence and Power of him *is* here, in the world, with us, and within us, mock as you may, and the fight with him, for the time, sore, and widely unprosperous.

But do not think I am speaking metaphorically, or rhetorically, or with any other than literal and earnest meaning of words. Hear me, I pray you, therefore, for a little while, as earnestly as I speak.

Every faculty of man's soul, and every instinct of it by which he is meant to live, is exposed to its own special form of corruption and whether within Man, or in the external world, there is a power or condition of temptation which is perpetually endeavouring to reduce every glory of his soul, and every power of his life, to such corruption as is possible to them. And the more beautiful they are, the more fearful is the death which is attached as a penalty to their degradation.

Take for instance that which, in its purity, is the source of the highest and purest mortal happiness—Love. Think of it first at its highest—as it may exist in the disciplined spirit of a perfect human creature, as it has so existed again and again, and does always, wherever it truly exists at all, as the *purifying* passion of the soul. I will not speak of the transcendental and imaginative intensity in which it may reign in noble hearts, as when it inspired the greatest religious poem yet given to men, but take it in its true and quiet purity in any simple lover's heart,—as you have it expressed, for instance, thus, exquisitely, in the *Angel in the House* —

“And there, with many a blissful tear,  
I vowed to love and prayed to wed  
The maiden who had grown so dear,—  
Thanked God, who had set her in my path,  
And promised, as I hoped to win, *her*”

I never would sully my faith  
 By the least selfishness or sin,  
 Whatever in her sight I'd seem  
 I'd really be, I ne'er would blend,  
 With my delight in her, a dream  
 'Twould change her cheek to comprehend,  
 And, if she wished it, would prefer  
 Another's to my own success,  
 And always seek the best for her  
 With unofficial tenderness "

Take this for the pure type of it in its simplicity, and then think of what corruption this passion is capable I will give you a type of that also, and at your very doors. I cannot refer you to the time when the crime happened, but it was some four or five years ago, near Newcastle, and it has remained always as a ghastly landmark in my mind, owing to the horror of the external circumstances. The body of the murdered woman was found naked, rolled into a heap of ashes, at the mouth of one of your pits.

Take those two limiting examples, of the Pure Passion, and of its corruption. Now, whatever influence it is, without or within us, which has a tendency to degrade the one towards the other, is literally and accurately "Satanic." And this treacherous and deceiving spirit is perpetually at work, so that all the worst evil among us is a betrayed or corrupted good. Take religion itself: the desire of finding out God, and placing one's self in some true son's or servant's relation to Him. The Devil, that is to say, the deceiving spirit within us, or outside of us, mixes up our own vanity with this desire, makes us think that in our love to God we have established some connection with Him which separates us from our fellow-men, and renders us superior to them. Then it takes but one wave of the Devil's hand, and we are burning them alive for taking the liberty of contradicting us.

Take the desire of teaching—the entirely unselfish and noble instinct for telling to those who are ignorant, the truth we know, and guarding them from the errors we see

them in danger of,—there is no nobler, no more constant instinct in honourable breasts, but let the Devil formalise it, and mix the pride of a profession with it—get foolish people entrusted with the business of instruction, and make their giddy heads giddier by putting them up in pulpits above a submissive crowd—and you have it instantly corrupted into its own reverse, you have an alliance *against* the light, shrieking at the sun, and moon, and stars, as profane spectra—a company of the blind, beseeching those they lead to remain blind also “The heavens and the lights that rule them are untrue, the laws of creation are treacherous, the poles of the earth are out of poise But *we* are true Light is in us only Shut your eyes close and fast, and we will lead you ”

Take the desire and faith of mutual help, the virtue of vowed brotherhood for the accomplishment of common purpose (without which nothing great can be wrought by multitudinous bands of men), let the Devil put pride of caste into it, and you have a military organisation applied for a thousand years to maintain that higher caste in idleness by robbing the labouring poor, let the Devil put a few small personal interests into it, and you have all faithful deliberation on national law rendered impossible in the parliaments of Europe, by the antagonism of parties

Take the instinct for justice, and the natural sense of indignation against crime, let the Devil colour it with personal passion, and you have a mighty race of true and tender-hearted men living for centuries in such bloody feud that every note and word of their national songs is a dirge, and every rock of their hills is a gravestone Take the love of beauty, and power of imagination, which are the source of every true achievement in art, let the Devil touch them with sensuality, and they are stronger than the sword or the flame to blast the cities where they were born into ruin without hope Take the instinct of industry and ardour of commerce, which are meant to be the support and mutual maintenance of man, let the Devil touch them with

avarice, and you shall see the avenues of the exchange choked with corpses that have died of famine

Now observe—I leave you to call this deceiving spirit what you like—or to theorise about it as you like. All that I desire you to recognise is the fact of its being here, and the need of its being fought with. If you take the Bible's account of it, or Dante's, or Milton's, you will receive the image of it as a mighty spiritual creature, commanding others, and resisted by others, if you take Æschylus's or Hesiod's account of it, you will hold it for a partly elementary and unconscious adversity of fate, and partly for a group of monstrous spiritual agencies, connected with death, and begotten out of the dust, if you take a modern rationalist's, you will accept it for a mere treachery and want of vitality in our own moral nature, exposing it to loathsomeness of moral disease, as the body is capable of mortification or leprosy. I do not care what you call it,—whose history you believe of it,—nor what you yourself can imagine about it, the origin, or nature, or name may be as you will, but the deadly reality of the thing is with us, and warring against us, and on our true war with it depends whatever life we can win. Deadly reality, I say. The puff-adder or horned asp are not more real. Unbelievable,—*those*,—unless you had seen them, no fable could have been coined out of any human brain so dreadful, within its own poor material sphere, as that blue-lipped serpent—working its way sidelong in the sand. As real, but with sting of eternal death—this worm that dies not, and fire that is not quenched, within our souls, or around them. Eternal death, I say—sure, that, whatever creed you hold,—if the old Scriptural one, Death of perpetual banishment from before God's face, if the modern rationalist one, Death eternal for *us*, instant and unredeemable ending of lives wasted in misery.

That is what this unquestionably present—this, according to his power, *omni*-present—fiend brings us to, daily. \* *Hē* is the person to be “voted” against, my working friend;

it is worth something, having a vote against *him*, if you can get it! Which you can, indeed, but not by gift from Cabinet Ministers, you must work warily with your own hands, and drop sweat of heart's blood, before you can record that vote effectually

Of which more in next letter.

## LETTER XI

THE SATANIC POWER IS MAINLY TWOFOLD, THE POWER OF CAUSING FALSEHOOD AND THE POWER OF CAUSING PAIN. THE RESISTANCE IS BY LAW OF HONOUR AND LAW OF DELIGHT

March 19, 1867

You may perhaps have thought my last three or four letters mere rhapsodies. They are nothing of the kind, they are accurate accounts of literal facts, which we have to deal with daily. This thing, or power, opposed to God's power, and specifically called "Mammon" in the Sermon on the Mount, is in deed and in truth a continually present and active enemy, properly called "*Arch-enemy*," that is to say, "Beginning and Prince of Enemies," and daily we have to record our vote for, or against him. Of the manner of which record we were next to consider.

This enemy is always recognisable, briefly in two functions. He is pre-eminently the Lord of *Lies* and the Lord of *Pain*. Wherever Lies are, he is, wherever Pain is, he has been—so that of the Spirit of Wisdom (who is called God's Helper, as Satan His adversary) it is written, not only that by her Kings reign, and Princes decree justice, but also that her ways are ways of Pleasantness, and all her paths Peace.

Therefore, you will succeed, you working men, in recording your votes against this arch-enemy, precisely in the degree in which you can do away with falsehood and pain in your work and lives, and bring truth into the one, and pleasure into the other, all education being directed to make yourselves and your children *capable of Honesty*, and *capable of Delight*, and to rescue yourselves from iniquity and agony. And this is what I meant by saying

in the preface to *Unto this Last* that the central requirement of education consisted in giving habits of gentleness and justice, "gentleness" (as I will show you presently) being the best single word I could have used to express the capacity for giving and receiving true pleasure, and "justice" being similarly the most comprehensive word for all kind of honest dealing

Now, I began these letters with the purpose of explaining the nature of the requirements of justice first, and then those of gentleness, but I allowed myself to be led into that talk about the theatres, not only because the thoughts could be more easily written as they came, but also because I was able thus to illustrate for you more directly the nature of the enemy we have to deal with. You do not perhaps know, though I say this diffidently (for I often find working men know many things which one would have thought were out of their way), that music was, among the Greeks, quite the first means of education, and that it was so connected with their system of ethics and of intellectual training, that the God of Music is with them also the God of Righteousness,—the God who purges and avenges iniquity, and contends with their Satan as represented under the form of Python, "the corrupter." And the Greeks were incontrovertibly right in this. Music is the nearest at hand, the most orderly, the most delicate, and the most perfect, of all bodily pleasures, it is also the only one which is equally helpful to all the ages of man,—helpful from the nurse's song to her infant, to the music, unheard of others, which often, if not most frequently, haunts the deathbed of pure and innocent spirits. And the action of the deceiving or devilish power is in *nothing* shown quite so distinctly among us at this day,—not even in our commercial dishonesties, nor in our social cruelties,—as in its having been able to take away music, as an instrument of education, altogether, and to enlist it almost wholly in the service of superstition on the one hand, and of sensuality on the other.

This power of the Muses, then, and its proper influence over you workmen, I shall eventually have much to insist upon with you, and in doing so I shall take that beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son (which I have already referred to), and explain as far as I know, the significance of it, and then I will take the three means of festivity, or wholesome human joy, therein stated,—fine dress, rich food, and music,—(“bring forth the fairest robe for him,”—“bring forth the fatted calf, and kill it,” “as he drew nigh, he heard music and dancing,”) and I will show you how all these three things, fine dress, rich food, and music (including ultimately all the other arts), are meant to be sources of life, and means of moral discipline, to all men, and how they have all three been made, by the Devil, the means of guilt, dissoluteness, and death. But first I must return to my original plan of these letters, and endeavour to set down for you some of the laws which in a true Working Men’s Parliament must be ordained in defence of Honesty

Of which laws (preliminary to all others, and necessary above all others), having now somewhat got my ravelled threads together again, I will begin talk in my next letter.



## LETTER XII

THE NECESSITY OF IMPERATIVE LAW TO THE PROSPERITY  
OF STATES*March 19, 1867*

I HAVE your most interesting letter,<sup>6</sup> which I keep for reference, when I come to the consideration of its subject in its proper place, under the head of abuse of Food I do not wonder that your life should be rendered unhappy by the scenes of drunkenness which you are so often compelled to witness, nor that this so gigantic and infectious evil should seem to you the root of the greater part of the misery of our lower orders I do not wonder that Sir Walter Trevelyan has given his best energy to its repression, nor even that another friend, George Cruikshank, has warped the entire current of his thoughts and life, at once to my admiration and my sorrow, from their natural field of work, that he might spend them, in struggle, for the poor lowest people whom he knows so well, with this fiend who grasps his victims by the throat first, and then by the heart. I wholly sympathise with you in indignation at the methods of temptation employed, and at the use of the fortunes made, by the vendors of death, and whatever immediately applicable legal means there might be of restricting the causes of drunkenness, I should without hesitation desire to bring into operation But all such appliance I consider temporary and provisionary, nor, while there is record of the miracle at Cana (not to speak of the sacrament), can I conceive it possible, without (logically) the denial of the entire truth of the New Testament, to reprobate the use of wine as a stimulus to the powers of life Supposing we did deny the words and

<sup>6</sup> Appendix IV

deeds of the Founder of Christianity, the authority of the wisest heathens, especially that of Plato in the *Laws*, is wholly against abstinence from wine, and much as I can believe, and as I have been endeavouring to make you believe also, of the subtlety of the Devil, I do not suppose the vine to have been one of his inventions. Of this, however, more in another place. By the way, was it not curious that in the *Manchester Examiner*, in which that letter of mine on the abuse of dancing appeared, there chanced to be in the next column a paragraph giving an account of a girl stabbing her betrayer in a ball-room, and another paragraph describing a Parisian character, which gives exactly the extreme type I wanted, for example of the abuse of food?<sup>7</sup>

I return, however, now to the examination of possible means for the enforcement of justice, in temper and in act, as the first of political requirements. And as, in stating my conviction of the necessity of certain stringent laws on this matter, I shall be in direct opposition to Mr. Stuart Mill, and more or less in opposition to other professors of modern political economy, as well as to many honest and active promoters of the privileges of working men (as if privilege only were wanted, and never restraint!), I will give you, as briefly as I can, the grounds on which I am prepared to justify such opposition.

When the crew of a wrecked ship escape in an open boat, and the boat is crowded, the provisions scanty, and the prospect of making land distant, laws are instantly established and enforced which no one thinks of disobeying. An entire equality of claim to the provisions is acknowledged without dispute, and an equal liability to necessary labour. No man who can row is allowed to refuse his oar, no man, however much money he may have saved in his pocket, is allowed so much as half a biscuit beyond his proper ration. Any riotous person who endangered the safety of the rest would be bound, and laid in the bottom of the boat, with-

<sup>7</sup> Appendix V

out the smallest compunction for such violation of the principles of individual liberty, and on the other hand, any child, or woman, or aged person, who was helpless, and exposed to greater danger and suffering by their weakness, would receive more than ordinary care and indulgence, not unaccompanied with unanimous self-sacrifice, on the part of the labouring crew

There is never any question, under circumstances like these, of what is right and wrong, worthy and unworthy, wise or foolish. If there *be* any question, there is little hope for boat or crew. The right man is put at the helm, every available hand is set to the oars, the sick are tended, and the vicious restrained, at once, and decisively, or if not, the end is near.

Now, the circumstances of every associated group of human society, contending bravely for national honours, and felicity of life, differ only from those thus supposed, in the greater, instead of less, necessity for the establishment of restraining law. There is no point of difference in the difficulties to be met, nor in the rights reciprocally to be exercised. Vice and indolence are not less, but more, injurious in a nation than in a boat's company, the modes in which they affect the interests of worthy persons being far more complex, and more easily concealed. The right of restraint, vested in those who labour, over those who would impede their labour, is as absolute in the large as in the small society, the equal claim to share in whatever is necessary to the common life (or commonwealth) is as indefeasible, the claim of the sick and helpless to be cared for by the strong with earnest self-sacrifice, is as pitiful and as imperative, the necessity that the governing authority should be in the hands of a true and trained pilot is as clear, and as constant. In none of these conditions is there any difference between a nation and a boat's company. The only difference is in this, that the impossibility of discerning the effects of individual error and crime, or of counteracting them by individual effort, in

the affairs of a great nation, renders it tenfold more necessary than in a small society that direction by law should be sternly established. Assume that your boat's crew is disorderly and licentious, and will, by agreement, submit to no order,—the most troublesome of them will yet be easily discerned, and the chance is that the best man among them knocks him down. Common instinct of self-preservation will make the rioters put a good sailor at the helm, and impulsive pity and occasional help will be, by heart and hand, here and there given to visible distress. Not so in the ship of the realm. The most troublesome persons in it are usually the least recognized for such, and the most active in its management, the best men mind their own business patiently, and are never thought of, the good helmsman never touches the tiller but in the last extremity, and the worst forms of misery are hidden, not only from every eye, but from every thought. On the deck, the aspect is of Cleopatra's galley—under hatches, there is a slave-hospital, while, finally (and this is the most fatal difference of all), even the few persons who care to interfere energetically, with purpose of doing good, can, in a large society, discern so little of the real state of evil to be dealt with, and judge so little of the best means of dealing with it, that half of their best efforts will be misdirected, and some may even do more harm than good. Whereas it is the sorrowful law of this universe that evil, even unconscious and unintended, never fails of its effect, and in a state where the evil and the good, under conditions of individual "liberty," are allowed to contend together, not only every *stroke* on the Devil's side tells—but every *slip* (the mistakes of wicked men being as mischievous as their successes), while on the side of right, there will be much direct and fatal defeat, and, even of its measure of victory, half will be fruitless.

It is true, of course, that in the end of ends, nothing but the right conquers the prevalent thorns of wrong, at last, crackle away in indiscriminate flame and of the good seed

sown, one grain in a thousand, at last, verily comes up—and somebody lives by it, but most of our great teachers, not excepting Carlyle and Emerson themselves, are a little too encouraging in their proclamation of this comfort, not, to my mind, very sufficient, when, for the present our fields are full of nothing but nettles and thistles, instead of wheat; and none of them seem to me yet to have enough insisted on the inevitable power and infectiousness of all evil, and the easy and utter extinguishableness of good. Medicine often fails of its effect—but poison never and while, in summing the observation of past life, not unwatchfully spent, I can truly say that I have a thousand times seen patience disappointed of her hope, and wisdom of her aim, I have never yet seen folly fruitless of mischief, nor vice conclude but in calamity.

There is, however, one important condition in national economy, in which the analogy of that of a ship's company is incomplete—namely, that while labour at oar or sail is necessarily united, and can attain no independent good, or personal profit, the labour properly undertaken by the several members of a political community is necessarily, and justly, within certain limits, independent, and obtains for them independent advantage, of which, if you will glance at the last paragraph of the first essay in *Munera Pulveris*,<sup>8</sup> you will see I should be the last person to propose depriving them. This great difference in final condition involves necessarily much complexity in the system and application of general laws, but it in no wise abrogates,—on the contrary, it renders yet more imperative,—the necessity for the firm ordinance of such laws, which, marking the due limits of independent agency, may enable it to exist in full energy, not only without becoming injurious, but so as more variously and perfectly to promote the entire interests of the commonwealth.

I will address myself therefore in my next letter to the statement of some of these necessary laws

<sup>8</sup> Appendix VI

## LETTER XIII

THE PROPER OFFICES OF THE BISHOP AND DUKE, OR,  
"OVERSEER" AND "LEADER"*March 21, 1867*

I SEE, by your last letter, for which I heartily thank you, that you would not sympathise with me in my sorrow for the desertion of his own work by George Cruikshank, that he may fight in the front of the temperance ranks. But you do not know what work he has left undone, nor how much richer inheritance you might have received from his hand. It was no more *his* business to etch diagrams of drunkenness than it is mine at this moment to be writing these letters against anarchy. It is "the first mild day of March" (high time, I think, that it should be!), and by rights I ought to be out among the budding banks and hedges, outlining sprays of hawthorn, and clusters of primrose. That is *my* right work, and it is not, in the inner gist and truth of it, right nor good, for you, or for anybody else, that Cruikshank with his great gift, and I with my weak, but yet thoroughly clear and definite one, should both of us be tormented by agony of indignation and compassion, till we are forced to give up our peace, and pleasure, and power, and rush down into the streets and lanes of the city, to do the little that is in the strength of our single hands against their uncleanness and iniquity. But, as in a sorely besieged town, every man must to the ramparts, whatsoever business he leaves, so neither he nor I have had any choice but to leave our household stuff, and go on crusade, such as we are called to, not that I mean, if Fate may be anywise resisted, to give up the strength of my life, as he has given his, for I think he was wrong in doing so, and that he should only have carried

the fiery cross his appointed leagues, and then given it to another hand and, for my own part, I mean these very letters to close my political work for many a day, and I write them, not in any hope of their being at present listened to, but to disburthen my heart of the witness I have to bear, that I may be free to go back to my garden lawns, and paint birds and flowers there

For these same statutes which we are to consider to-day, have indeed been in my mind now these fourteen years, ever since I wrote the last volume of the *Stones of Venice*, in which you will find, in the long note on Modern Education, most of what I have been now in detail writing to you, hinted in abstract, and, at the close of it, this sentence, of which I solemnly now avouch (in thankfulness that I was permitted to write it) every word —“Finally, I hold it for indisputable, that the first duty of a state is to see that every child born therein shall be well housed, clothed, fed, and educated, till it attain years of discretion But in order to the effecting this the Government must have an authority over the people of which we now do not so much as dream ”

That authority I did not then endeavour to define, for I knew all such assertions would be useless, and that the necessarily resultant outcry would merely diminish my influence in other directions But now I do not care about influence any more, it being only my concern to say truly that which I know, and, if it may be, get some quiet life, yet, among the fields in the evening shadow

There is, I suppose, no word which men are prouder of the right to attach to their names, or more envious of others who bear it, when they themselves may not, than the word “noble.” Do you know what it originally meant, and always, in the right use of it, means? It means a “known” person, one who has risen far enough above others to draw men’s eyes to him, and to be known (honourably) for such and such an one “Ignoble,” on the other hand, is derived from the same root as the word

"ignorance". It means an unknown, inglorious person. And no more singular follies have been committed by weak human creatures than those which have been caused by the instinct, pure and simple, of escaping from this obscurity. Instinct, which, corrupted, will hesitate at no means, good or evil, of satisfying itself with notoriety—instinct, nevertheless, which, like all other natural ones, has a true and pure purpose, and ought always in a worthy way to be satisfied.

All men ought to be in this sense "noble," known of each other, and desiring to be known. And the first law which a nation, desiring to conquer all the devices of the Father of Lies, should establish among its people, is that they *shall* be so known.

Will you please now read the eighteenth and nineteenth pages of *Sesame and Lilies*?<sup>9</sup> The reviewers in the ecclesiastical journals laughed at them, as a rhapsody, when the book came out, none having the slightest notion of what I meant (nor, indeed, do I well see how it could be otherwise!) Nevertheless, I meant precisely and literally what is there said, namely, that a bishop's duty being to watch over the *souls* of his people, and give account of every one of them, it becomes practically necessary for him first to give some account of their *bodies*. Which he was wont to do in the early days of Christianity by help of a person called "deacon" or "ministering servant," whose name is still retained among preliminary ecclesiastical dignities, vainly enough! Putting, however, all question of forms and names aside, the thing actually needing to be done is this—that over every hundred (or some not much greater number) of the families composing a Christian State, there should be appointed an overseer, or bishop, to render account, to the State, of the life of every individual in those families, and to have care both of their interest and conduct to such an extent as they may be willing to admit, or as their faults may justify so that it may be impossible

<sup>9</sup> Appendix VII



for any person, however humble, to suffer from unknown want, or live in unrecognized crime,—such help and observance being rendered without officiousness either of interference or inquisition (the limits of both being determined by national law), but with the patient and gentle watchfulness which true Christian pastors now exercise over their flocks, only with a higher legal authority, presently to be defined, of interference on due occasion

And with this farther function, that such overseers shall be not only the pastors, but the biographers, of their people, a written statement of the principal events in the life of each family being annually required to be rendered by them to a superior State officer. These records, laid up in public offices, would soon furnish indications of the families whom it would be advantageous to the nation to advance in position, or distinguish with honour, and aid by such reward as it should be the object of every Government to distribute no less punctually, and far more frankly, than it distributes punishment (compare *Munera Pulveris*, Essay IV, in paragraph on Critic Law), while the mere fact of permanent record being kept of every event of importance, whether disgraceful or worthy of praise, in each family, would of itself be a deterrent from crime, and a stimulant to well-deserving conduct, far beyond mere punishment or reward

Nor need you think that there would be anything in such a system un-English, or tending to espionage. No uninvited visits should ever be made in any house, unless law had been violated, nothing recorded, against its will, of any family, but what was inevitably known of its publicly visible conduct, and the results of that conduct. What else was written should be only by the desire, and from the communications, of its head. And in a little while it would come to be felt that the true history of a nation was indeed not of its wars, but of its households, and the desire of men would rather be to obtain some conspicuous place in these honourable annals, than to shrink behind

closed shutters from public sight Until at last, George Herbert's grand word of command would hold not only on the conscience, but the actual system and outer economy of life,

"Think the King sees thee still, for *his* King does,

Secondly, above these bishops or pastors, who are only to be occupied in offices of familiar supervision and help, should be appointed higher officers of State, having executive authority over as large districts as might be conveniently (according to the number and circumstances of their inhabitants) committed to their care, officers, who, according to the reports of the pastors, should enforce or mitigate the operation of too rigid general law, and determine measures exceptionally necessary for public advantage For instance, the general law being that all children of the operative classes, at a certain age, should be sent to public schools, these superior officers should have power, on the report of the pastors, to dispense with the attendance of children who had sick parents to take charge of, or whose home-life seemed to be one of better advantage for them than that of the common schools; or who for any other like cause might justifiably claim remission And it being the general law that the entire body of the public should contribute to the cost, and divide the profits, of all necessary public works and undertakings, as roads, mines, harbour protections, and the like, and that nothing of this kind should be permitted to be in the hands of private speculators, it should be the duty of the district officer to collect whatever information was accessible respecting such sources of public profit, and to represent the circumstances in Parliament and then, with parliamentary authority, but on his own sole personal responsibility, to see that such enterprises were conducted honestly, and with due energy and order

The appointment to both these offices should be by election, and for life, by what forms of election shall be a

matter of inquiry, after we have determined some others of the necessary constitutional laws

I do not doubt but that you are already beginning to think it was with good reason I held my peace these fourteen years,—and that, for any good likely to be done by speaking, I might as well have held it altogether!

It may be so but merely to complete and explain my own work, it is necessary that I should say these things finally, and I believe that the imminent danger to which we are now in England exposed by the gradually accelerated fall of our aristocracy (wholly their own fault), and the substitution of money-power for their martial one, and by the correspondently imminent prevalence of mob-violence here, as in America, together with the continually increasing chances of insane war, founded on popular passion, whether of pride, fear, or acquisitiveness,—all these dangers being further darkened and degraded by the monstrous forms of vice and selfishness which the appliances of recent wealth, and of vulgar mechanical art, make possible to the million,—will soon bring us into a condition in which men will be glad to listen to almost any words but those of a demagogue, and to seek any means of safety rather than those in which they have lately trusted. So, with your good leave, I will say my say to the end, mock at it who may

P S—I take due note of the regulations of trade proposed in your letter just received <sup>10</sup>—all excellent. I shall come to them presently. “Cash payment” above all. You may write that on your trade-banners in letters of gold, wherever you would have them raised victoriously.

<sup>10</sup> Appendix VIII

## LETTER XIV

THE FIRST GROUP OF ESSENTIAL LAWS—AGAINST THEFT  
BY FALSE WORK, AND BY BANKRUPTCY—NECESSARY  
PUBLICITY OF ACCOUNTS*March 26, 1867*

I FEEL much inclined to pause at this point, to answer the kind of questions and objections which I know must be rising in your mind, respecting the authority supposed to be lodged in the persons of the officers just specified. But I can neither define, nor justify to you, the powers I would desire to see given to them, till I state to you the kind of laws they would have to enforce of which the first group should be directed to the prevention of all kinds of thieving, but chiefly of the occult and polite methods of it, and, of all occult methods, chiefly, the making and selling of bad goods. No form of theft is so criminal as this—none so deadly to the State. If you break into a man's house and steal a hundred pound's worth of plate, he knows his loss, and there is an end (besides that you take your risk of punishment for your gain, like a man). And if you do it bravely and openly, and habitually live by such inroad, you may retain nearly every moral and manly virtue, and become a heroic rider and reiver, and hero of song. But if you swindle me out of twenty shillings' worth of quality, on each of a hundred bargains, I lose my hundred pounds all the same, and I get a hundred untrustworthy articles besides, which will fail me and injure me in all manner of ways, when I least expect it, and you, having done your thieving basely, are corrupted by the guilt of it to the very heart's core.

This is the first thing, therefore, which your general laws must be set to punish, fiercely, immitigably, to the

utter prevention and extinction of it, or there is no hope for you No religion that ever was preached on this earth of God's rounding, ever proclaimed any salvation to sellers of bad goods If the Ghost that is in you, whatever the essence of it, leaves your hand a juggler's, and your heart a cheat's, it is not a Holy Ghost, be assured of that And for the rest, all political economy, as well as all higher virtue, depends *first on sound work*

Let your laws then, I say, in the beginning, be set to secure this You cannot make punishment too stern for subtle knavery Keep no truce with this enemy, whatever pardon you extend to more generous ones For light weights and false measures, or for proved adulteration or dishonest manufacture of article, the penalty should be simply confiscation of goods and sending out of the country The kind of person who desires prosperity by such practices, could not be made to "emigrate" too speedily What to do with him in the place you appointed to be blessed by his presence, we will in time consider

Under such penalty, however, and yet more under the pressure of such a right public opinion as could pronounce and enforce such penalty, I imagine that sham articles would become speedily as rare as sound ones are now The chief difficulty in the matter would be to fix your standard This would have to be done by the guild of every trade in its own manner, and within certain easily recognisable limits, and this fixing of standard would necessitate much simplicity in the forms and kinds of articles sold You could only warrant a certain kind of glazing or painting in china, a certain quality of leather or cloth, bricks of a certain clay, loaves of a defined mixture of meal Advisable improvements or varieties in manufacture would have to be examined and accepted by the trade guild when so accepted, they would be announced in public reports, and all puffery and self-proclamation, on the part of tradesmen, absolutely forbidden, as much as the making of any other kind of noise or disturbance

But observe, this law is only to have force over tradesmen whom I suppose to have joined voluntarily in carrying out a better system of commerce. Outside of their guild, they would have to leave the rogue to puff and cheat as he chose, and the public to be gulled as they chose. All that is necessary is that the said public should clearly know the shops in which they could get warranted articles, and, as clearly, those in which they bought at their own risk.

And the above-named penalty of confiscation of goods should of course be enforced only against dishonest members of the trade guild. If people chose to buy of those who had openly refused to join an honest society, they should be permitted to do so at their pleasure and peril. and this for two reasons, the first, that it is always necessary, in enacting strict law, to leave some safety valve for outlet of irrepressible vice (nearly all the stern lawgivers of old time erred by oversight in this, so that the morbid elements of the State, which it should be allowed to get rid of in a cutaneous and openly curable manner, were thrown inwards, and corrupted its constitution, and broke all down), the second, that operations of trade and manufacture conducted under and guarded by severe law, ought always to be subject to the stimulus of such erratic external ingenuity as cannot be tested by law, or would be hindered from its full exercise by the dread of it, not to speak of the farther need of extending all possible indulgence to foreign traders who might wish to exercise their industries here without liability to the surveillance of our trade guilds.

Farther, while for all articles warranted by the guild (as above supposed) the prices should be annually fixed for the trade throughout the kingdom, and the producing workmen's wages fixed, so as to define the master's profits within limits admitting only such variation as the nature of the given article of sale rendered inevitable,—yet, in the production of other classes of articles, whether by skill of applied handicraft, or fineness of material above

the standard of the guild, attaining, necessarily, values above its assigned prices, every firm should be left free to make its own independent efforts and arrangements with its workmen, subject always to the same penalty, if it could be proved to have consistently described or offered anything to the public for what it was not and finally, the state of the affairs of every firm should be annually reported to the guild, and its books laid open to inspection, for guidance in the regulation of prices in the subsequent year, and any firm whose liabilities exceeded its assets by a hundred pounds should be forthwith declared bankrupt And I will anticipate what I have to say in succeeding letters so far as to tell you that I would have this condition extend to every firm in the country, large or small, and of whatever rank in business And thus you perceive, my friend, I shall not have to trouble you or myself much with deliberations respecting commercial "panics," nor to propose legislative cures for *them*, by any laxatives or purgatives of paper currency, or any other change of pecuniary diet

## LETTER XV

THE NATURE OF THEFT BY UNJUST PROFITS—CRIME CAN  
FINALLY BE ARRESTED ONLY BY EDUCATION

29th March

THE first methods of polite robbery, by dishonest manufacture, and by debt, of which we have been hitherto speaking, are easily enough to be dealt with and ended, when once men have a mind to end them. But the third method of polite robbery, by dishonest *acquisition*, has many branches, and is involved among honest arts of acquisition, so that it is difficult to repress the one without restraining the other.

Observe, first, large fortunes cannot honestly be made by the work of any *one* man's hands or head. If his work benefits multitudes, and involves position of high trust, it may be (I do not say that it *is*) expedient to reward him with great wealth or estate, but fortune of this kind is freely given in gratitude for benefit, not as repayment for labour. Also, men of peculiar genius in any art, if the public can enjoy the product of their genius, may set it at almost any price they choose, but this, I will show you when I come to speak of art, is unlawful on their part, and ruinous to their own powers. Genius must not be sold, the sale of it involves, in a transcendental, but perfectly true sense, the guilt both of simony and prostitution. Your labour only may be sold, your soul must not.

Now, by fair pay for fair labour, according to the rank of it, a man can obtain means of comfortable, or if he needs it, refined life. But he cannot obtain large fortune. Such fortunes as are now the prizes of commerce can be made only in one of three ways:—



1 By obtaining command over the labour of multitudes of other men, and taxing it for our own profit

2 By treasure-trove,—as of mines, useful vegetable products, and the like,—in circumstances putting them under our own exclusive control

3 By speculation (commercial gambling)

The two first of these means of obtaining riches are, in some forms and within certain limits, lawful, and advantageous to the State. The third is entirely detrimental to it, for in all cases of profit derived from speculation, at best, what one man gains another loses, and the net result to the State is zero (pecuniarily), with the loss of the time and ingenuity spent in the transaction, besides the disadvantage involved in the discouragement of the losing party, and the corrupted moral natures of both. This is the result of speculation at its best. At its worst, not only B loses what A gains (having taken his fair risk of such loss for his fair chance of gain), but C and D, who never had any chance at all, are drawn in by B's fall, and the final result is that A sets up his carriage on the collected sum which was once the means of living to a dozen families.

Nor is this all. For while real commerce is founded on real necessities or uses, and limited by these, speculation, of which the object is merely gain, seeks to excite imaginary necessities and popular desires, in order to gather its temporary profit from the supply of them. So that not only the persons who lend their money to it will be finally robbed, but the work done with their money will be for the most part useless, and thus the entire body of the public injured as well as the persons concerned in the transaction. Take, for instance, the architectural decorations of railways throughout the kingdom,—representing many millions of money for which no farthing of dividend can ever be forthcoming. The public will not be induced to pay the smallest fraction of higher fare to Rochester or Dover because the ironwork of the bridge which carries

them over the Thames is covered with floral cockades, and the piers of it edged with ornamental cornices. All that work is simply put there by the builders that they may put the per-centage upon it into their own pockets, and, the rest of the money being thrown into that floral form, there is an end of it, as far as the shareholders are concerned. Millions upon millions have thus been spent, within the last twenty years, on ornamental arrangements of zig-zag bricks, black and blue tiles, cast-iron foliage, and the like, of which millions, as I said, not a penny can ever return into the shareholders' pockets, nor contribute to public speed or safety on the line. It is all sunk for ever in ornamental architecture, and (trust me for this!) *all that architecture is bad*. As such, it had incomparably better not have been built. Its only result will be to corrupt what capacity of taste or right pleasure in such work we have yet left to us! And consider a little, what other kind of result than that might have been attained if all those millions had been spent usefully—say, in buying land for the people, or building good houses for them, or (if it had been imperatively required to be spent decoratively) in laying out gardens and parks for them,—or buying noble works of art for their permanent possession,—or, best of all, establishing frequent public schools and libraries? Count what those lost millions would have so accomplished for you! But you left the affair to “supply and demand,” and the British public had not brains enough to “demand” land, or lodging, or books. It “demanded” cast-iron cockades and zig-zag cornices, and is “supplied” with them, to its beatitude for ever more.

Now, the theft we first speak of, by falsity of workmanship or material, is, indeed, so far worse than those thefts by dishonest acquisition, that there is no possible excuse for it on the ground of self-deception, while many speculative thefts are committed by persons who really mean to do no harm, but think the system on the whole a fair one, and do the best they can in it for themselves.

But in the real fact of the crime, when consciously committed, in the numbers reached by its injury, in the degree of suffering it causes to those whom it ruins, in the baseness of its calculated betrayal of implicit trust, in the yet more perfect vileness of the obtaining such trust by misrepresentation, only that it *may* be betrayed, and in the impossibility that the crime should be at all committed, except by persons of good position and large knowledge of the world,—what manner of theft is so wholly unpardonable, so inhuman, so contrary to every law and instinct which binds or animates society?

And then consider farther, how many of the carriages that glitter in our streets are driven, and how many of the stately houses that gleam among our English fields are inhabited, by this kind of thief!

I happened to be reading this morning (29th March) some portions of the Lent services, and I came to a pause over the familiar words, "And with Him they crucified two thieves" Have you ever considered (I speak to you now as a professing Christian), why, in the accomplishment of the "numbering among transgressors," the transgressors chosen should have been especially thieves—not murderers, nor, as far as we know, sinners by any gross violence? Do you observe how the sin of theft is again and again indicated as the chiefly antagonistic one to the law of Christ? "This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the bag" (of Judas) And again, though Barabbas was a leader of sedition, and a murderer besides,—(that the popular election might be in all respects perfect)—yet St John, in curt and conclusive account of him, fastens again on the theft. "Then cried they all again saying, Not this man, but Barabbas Now Barabbas was a robber" I believe myself the reason to be that theft is indeed, in its subtle forms, the most complete and excuseless of human crimes Sins of violence usually have passion to excuse them they may be the madness of moments, or they

may be apparently the only means of extrication from calamity. In other cases, they are the diseased habits of lower and brutified natures. But theft involving deliberative intellect, and absence of passion, is the purest type of wilful iniquity, in persons capable of doing right. Which being so, it seems to be fast becoming the practice of modern society to crucify its Christ indeed, as willingly as ever, in the persons of His poor, but by no means now to crucify its thieves beside Him! It elevates its thieves after another fashion, sets them upon an hill, that their light may shine before men, and that all may see their good works, and glorify their Father, in—the Opposite of Heaven.

I think your trade parliament will have to put an end to this kind of business somehow! But it cannot be done by laws merely, where the interests and circumstances are so extended and complex. Nay, even as regards lower and more defined crimes, the assigned punishment is not to be thought of as a preventive means, but only as the seal of opinion set by society on the fact. Crime cannot be hindered by punishment, it will always find some shape and outlet, unpunishable or unclosed. Crime can only be truly hindered by letting no man grow up a criminal—by taking away the *will* to commit sin, not by mere punishment of its commission. Crime, small and great, can only be truly stayed by education,—not the education of the intellect only, which is, on some men, wasted, and for others mischievous, but education of the heart, which is alike good and necessary for all. So, on this matter, I will try to say one or two things of which the silence has kept my own heart heavy this many a day, in my next letter.

## LETTER XVI

## OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IRRESPECTIVE OF CLASS-DISTINCTION—IT CONSISTS ESSENTIALLY IN GIVING HABITS OF MERCY, AND HABITS OF TRUTH

*March 30, 1867*

THANK you for sending me the pamphlet containing the account of the meeting of clergy and workmen, and of the reasonings which there took place. I cannot promise you that I shall read much of them, for the question to my mind most requiring discussion and explanation is not, why workmen don't go to church, but—why other people do. However, this I know, that if, among our many spiritual teachers, there are indeed any who heartily and literally believe that the wisdom they have to teach, "is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her," and if, so believing, they will further dare to affront their congregations by the assertion, and plainly tell them they are not to hunt for rubies or gold any more, at their peril, till they have gained that which cannot be gotten for gold, nor silver weighed for the price thereof,—such believers, so preaching, and refusing to preach otherwise till they are in that attended to, will never want congregations, both of working men, and every other kind of men.

Did you ever hear of anything else so ill-named as the phantom called the "Philosopher's" Stone? A talisman that shall turn base metal into precious metal, nature acknowledges not, nor would any but fools seek after it. But a talisman to turn base souls into noble souls, nature has given us! and that is a "Philosopher's" Stone indeed, but it is a stone which the builders refuse.

If there were two valleys in California or Australia,

with two different kinds of gravel in the bottom of them; and in the one stream bed you could dig up, occasionally and by good fortune, nuggets of gold, and in the other stream bed, certainly and without hazard, you could dig up little caskets, containing talismans which gave length of days and peace, and alabaster vases of precious balms, which were better than the Arabian Dervish's ointment, and made not only the eyes to see, but the mind to know, whatever it would—I wonder in which of the stream beds there would be most diggers?

“Time is money”—so say your practised merchants and economists. None of them, however, I fancy, as they draw towards death, find that the reverse is true and that “money is time”? Perhaps it might be better for them in the end if they did not turn so much of their time into money, as no re-transformation is possible! There are other things, however, which in the same sense are money, or can be changed into it, as well as time. Health is money, wit is money, knowledge is money, and all your health, and wit, and knowledge may be changed for gold, and the happy goal so reached, of a sick, insane, and blind, auriferous old age, but the gold cannot be changed in its turn back into health and wit.

“Time is money,” the words tingle in my ears so that I can't go on writing. Is it nothing better, then? If we could thoroughly understand that time was—*itself*,—would it not be more to the purpose? A thing of which loss or gain was absolute loss, and perfect gain. And that it was expedient also to buy health and knowledge with money, if so purchaseable, but not to buy money with *them*?

And purchaseable they are, at the beginning of life, though not at its close. Purchaseable, always, for others, if not for ourselves. You can buy, and cheaply, life, endless life, according to your Christian's creed—(there's a bargain for you!) but—long years of knowledge, and peace, and power, and happiness of love—these assuredly, and

irrespectively of any creed or question,—for all those desolate and haggard children about your streets

“That is not political economy, however” Pardon me, the all-comfortable saying, “What he layeth out, it shall be paid him again,” is quite literally true in matters of education, no money-seed can be sown with so sure and large return at harvest-time as that, only of this money-seed, more than of flesh-seed, it is utterly true, “That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it *die*” You must forget your money, and every other material interest, and educate for education’s sake only! or the very good you try to bestow will become venomous, and that and your money will be lost together

And this has been the real cause of failure in our efforts for education hitherto—whether from above or below There is no honest desire for the thing itself The cry for it among the lower orders is because they think that, when once they have got it, they must become upper orders There is a strange notion in the mob’s mind, now-a-days (including all our popular economists and educators, as we most justly may, under that brief term “mob”), that *everybody* can be uppermost, or at least, that a state of general scramble, in which everybody in his turn should come to the top, is a proper Utopian constitution, and that, once give every lad a good education, and he cannot but come to ride in his carriage (the methods of supply of coachmen and footmen not being contemplated) And very sternly I say to you—and say from sure knowledge—that a man had better not know how to read or write, than receive education on such terms

The first condition under which it can be given usefully is, that it should be clearly understood to be no means of getting on in the world, but a means of staying pleasantly in your place there And the first elements of State education should be calculated equally for the advantage of every order of person composing the State. From the lowest to the highest class, every child born in this island

should be required by law to receive these general elements of human discipline and to be baptised—not with a drop of water on its forehead—but in the cloud and sea of heavenly wisdom and of earthly power

And the elements of this general State education should be briefly these

First —The body must be made as beautiful and perfect in its youth as it can be, wholly irrespective of ulterior purpose If you mean afterwards to set the creature to business which will degrade its body and shorten its life, first, I should say, simply,—you had better let such business alone,—but if you must have it done, somehow, yet let the living creature whom you mean to kill, get the full strength of its body first, and taste the joy, and bear the beauty of youth After that, poison it, if you will Economically, the arrangement is a wiser one, for it will take longer in the killing than if you began with it younger, and you will get an excess of work out of it which will more than pay for its training

Therefore, first teach—as I said in the preface to *Unto this Last*—"The Laws of Health, and exercises enjoined by them," and to this end your schools must be in fresh country, and amidst fresh air, and have great extents of land attached to them in permanent estate Riding, running, all the honest personal exercises of offence and defence, and music, should be the primal heads of this bodily education.

Next to these bodily accomplishments, the two great mental graces should be taught, Reverence and Compassion not that these are in a literal sense to be "taught," for they are innate in every well-born human creature, but they have to be developed, exactly as the strength of the body must be, by deliberate and constant exercise I never understood why Goethe (in the plan of education in *Wilhelm Meister*) says that reverence is not innate, but must be taught from without, it seems to me so fixedly a function of the human spirit, that if men can get nothing else to reverence they will worship a fool, or a stone, or a



vegetable <sup>11</sup> But to teach reverence rightly is to attach it to the right persons and things, first, by setting over your youth masters whom they cannot but love and respect, next, by gathering for them, out of past history, whatever has been most worthy, in human deeds and human passion, and leading them continually to dwell upon such instances, making this the principal element of emotional excitement to them, and, lastly, by letting them justly feel, as far as may be, the smallness of their own powers and knowledge, as compared with the attainments of others

Compassion, on the other hand, is to be taught chiefly by making it a point of honour, collaterally with courage, and in the same rank (as indeed the complement and evidence of courage), so that, in the code of unwritten school law, it shall be held as shameful to have done a cruel thing as a cowardly one All infliction of pain on weaker creatures is to be stigmatised as unmanly crime, and every possible opportunity taken to exercise the youths in offices of some practical help, and to acquaint them with the realities of the distress which, in the joyfulness of entering into life, it is so difficult for those who have not seen home suffering, to conceive

Reverence, then, and compassion, we are to teach primarily, and with these, as the bond and guardian of them, truth of spirit and word, of thought and sight Truth, earnest and passionate, sought for like a treasure, and kept like a crown

This teaching of truth as a habit will be the chief work the master has to do, and it will enter into all parts of education First, you must accustom the children to close accuracy of statement, this both as a principle of honour, and as an accomplishment of language, making them try always who shall speak truest, both as regards the fact he has to relate or express (not concealing or exaggerating), and as regards the precision of the words he expresses it

<sup>11</sup> By steady preaching against it, one may quench reverence, and bring insolence to its height, but the instinct cannot be wholly uprooted

in, thus making truth (which, indeed, it is) the test of perfect language, and giving the intensity of a moral purpose to the study and art of words then carrying this accuracy into all habits of thought and observation also, so as always to *think* of things as they truly are, and to *see* them as they truly are, as far as in us rests And it *does* rest much in our power, for all false thoughts and seeings come mainly of our thinking of what we have no business with, and looking for things we want to see, instead of things that ought to be seen

“Do not talk but of what you know, do not think but of what you have materials to think justly upon, and do not look for things only that you like, when there are others to be seen”—this is the lesson to be taught to our youth, and inbred in them, and that mainly by our own example and continence Never teach a child anything of which you are not yourself sure, and, above all, if you feel anxious to force anything into its mind in tender years, that the virtue of youth and early association may fasten it there, be sure it is no lie which you thus sanctify There is always more to be taught of absolute, incontrovertible knowledge, open to its capacity, than any child can learn; there is no need to teach it anything doubtful Better that it should be ignorant of a thousand truths, than have consecrated in its heart a single lie

And for this, as well as for many other reasons, the principal subjects of education, after history, ought to be natural science and mathematics, but with respect to these studies, your schools will require to be divided into three groups, one for children who will probably have to live in cities, one for those who will live in the country, and one for those who will live at sea, the schools for these last, of course, being always placed on the coast And for children whose life is to be in cities, the subjects of study should be, as far as their disposition will allow of it, mathematics and the arts, for children who are to live in the country, natural history of birds, insects, and plants,

together with agriculture taught practically, and for children who are to be seamen, physical geography, astronomy, and the natural history of sea fish and sea birds

This, then, being the general course and material of education for all children, observe farther that in the preface to *Unto this Last* I said that every child, besides passing through this course, was at school to learn "the calling by which it was to live" And it may perhaps appear to you that after, or even in the early stages of education such as this above described, there are many callings which, however much called to them, the children might not willingly determine to learn or live by "Probably," you may say, "after they have learned to ride, and fence, and sing, and know birds and flowers, it will be little to their liking to make themselves into tailors, carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and the like" And I cannot but agree with you as to the exceeding probability of some such reluctance on their part, which will be a very awkward state of things indeed (since we can by no means get on without tailoring and shoemaking), and one to be meditated upon very seriously in next letter

P S—Thank you for sending me your friend's letter about Gustave Doré, he is wrong, however, in thinking there is any good in those illustrations of *Elaine* I had intended to speak of them afterwards, for it is to my mind quite as significant—almost as awful—a sign of what is going on in the midst of us, that our great English poet should have suffered his work to be thus contaminated, as that the lower Evangelicals, never notable for sense in the arts, should have got their Bibles dishonoured Those *Elaine* illustrations are just as impure as anything else that Doré has done, but they are also vapid, and without any one merit whatever in point of art The illustrations to the *Contes Drolatiques* are full of power and invention, but those to *Elaine* are merely and simply stupid, theatrical *bêtises*, with the taint of the charnel-house on them besides

## LETTER XVII

## THE RELATIONS OF EDUCATION TO POSITION IN LIFE

*April 3, 1867*

I AM not quite sure that you will feel the awkwardness of the dilemma I got into at the end of last letter, as much as I do myself. You working men have been crowing and peacocking at such a rate lately, and setting yourselves forth so confidently for the cream of society, and the top of the world, that perhaps you will not anticipate any of the difficulties which suggest themselves to a thoroughbred Tory and Conservative, like me. Perhaps you will expect a youth properly educated—a good rider—musician—and well-grounded scholar in natural philosophy, to think it a step of promotion when he has to go and be made a tailor or, or a coalheaver? If you do, I should very willingly admit that you might be right, and go on to the farther development of my notions without pausing at this stumbling-block, were it not that, unluckily, all the wisest men whose sayings I ever heard or read, agree in expressing (one way or another) just such contempt, for those useful occupations, as I dread on the part of my foolishly refined scholars. Shakespeare and Chaucer,—Dante and Virgil,—Horace and Pindar,—Homer, Æschylus, and Plato,—all the men of any age or country who seem to have had Heaven's music on their lips, agree in their scorn of mechanic life. And I imagine that the feeling of prudent Englishmen, and sensible as well as sensitive Englishwomen, on reading my last letter, would mostly be, "Is the man mad, or laughing at us, to propose educating the working classes this way?" He could not, if his wild scheme were possible, find a better method of making them acutely wretched."

It may be so, my sensible and polite friends, and I am heartily willing, as well as curious, to hear you develop your own scheme of operative education, so only that it be universal, orderly, and careful. I do not say that I shall be prepared to advocate my athletics and philosophies instead. Only, observe what you admit, or imply, in bringing forward your possibly wiser system. You imply that a certain portion of mankind must be employed in degrading work, and that, to fit them for this work, it is necessary to limit their knowledge, their active powers, and their enjoyments, from childhood upwards, so that they may not be able to conceive of any state better than the one they were born in, nor possess any knowledge or acquirements inconsistent with the coarseness, or disturbing the monotony, of their vulgar occupation. And by their labour in this contracted state of mind, we superior beings are to be maintained, and always to be curtsied to by the properly ignorant little girls, and capped by the properly ignorant little boys, whenever we pass by.

Mind, I do not say that this is *not* the right state of things. Only, if it be, you need not be so over-particular about the slave trade, it seems to me. What is the use of arguing so pertinaciously that a black's skull will hold as much as a white's, when you are declaring in the same breath that a white's skull must not hold as much as it can, or it will be the worse for him? It does not appear to me at all a profound state of slavery to be whipped into doing a piece of low work that I don't like, but it is a very profound state of slavery to be kept, myself, low in the forehead, that I may not dislike low work.

You see, my friend, the dilemma is really an awkward one, whichever way you look at it. But, what is still worse, I am not puzzled only, at this part of my scheme, about the boys I shall have to make *workmen* of, I am just as much puzzled about the boys I shall have to make *nothing* of! Grant, that by hook or crook, by reason or rattle, I persuade a certain number of the roughest ones

into some serviceable business, and get coats and shoes made for the rest,—what is the business of “the rest” to be? Naturally, according to the existing state of things, one supposes they are to belong to some of the gentlemanly professions, to be soldiers, lawyers, doctors, or clergymen. But alas, I shall not want any soldiers of special skill or pugnacity! *All* my boys will be soldiers. So far from wanting any lawyers of the kind that live by talking, I shall have the strongest possible objection to their appearance in the country. For doctors I shall always entertain a profound respect, but when I get my athletic education fairly established, of what help to them will my respect be? They will all starve! And for clergymen, it is true, I shall have a large number of episcopates—one over every hundred families—(and many positions of civil authority also, for civil officers, above them and below), but all these places will involve much hard work, and be anything but covetable, while, of clergymen’s usual work, admonition, theological demonstration, and the like, I shall want very little done indeed, and that little done for nothing! for I will allow no man to admonish anybody until he has previously earned his own dinner by more productive work than admonition.

Well, I wish, my friend, you would write me a word or two in answer to this, telling me your own ideas as to the proper issue out of these difficulties. I should like to know what you think, and what you suppose others will think, before I tell you my own notions about the matter.

## LETTER XVIII

THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF SERVILE EMPLOYMENTS—THE  
POSSIBLE PRACTICE AND EXHIBITION OF SINCERE  
HUMILITY BY RELIGIOUS PERSONS*April 7, 1867*

I HAVE been waiting these three days to know what you would say to my last questions, and now you send me two pamphlets of Combe's to read! I never read anything in spring-time (except the A1, A1, on the "sanguine flower inscribed with woe"), and, besides, if, as I gather from your letter, Combe thinks that among well-educated boys there would be a per-centage constitutionally inclined to be cobblers, or looking forward with unction to establishment in the oil and tallow line, or fretting themselves for a flunkey's uniform, nothing that he could say would make me agree with him. I know, as well as he does, the unconquerable differences in the clay of the human creature, and I know that, in the outset, whatever system of education you adopted, a large number of children could be made nothing of, and would necessarily fall out of the ranks, and supply candidates enough for degradation to common mechanical business but this enormous difference in bodily and mental capacity has been mainly brought about by difference in occupation, and by direct mal-treatment, and in a few generations, if the poor were cared for, their marriages looked after, and sanitary law enforced, a beautiful type of face and form, and a high intelligence, would become all but universal in a climate like this of England. Even as it is, the marvel is always to me how the race resists, at least in its childhood, influences of ill-regulated birth, poisoned food, poisoned air, and soul neglect. I often see faces of children, as I walk through

the black district of St Giles's (lying, as it does, just between my own house and the British Museum), which, through all their pale and corrupt misery, recall the old "Non Angli," and recall it, not by their beauty, but by their sweetness of expression, even though signed already with trace and cloud of the coming life,—a life so bitter that it would make the curse of the 137th Psalm true upon our modern Babylon, though we were to read it thus, "Happy shall *thy children* be, if one taketh and dasheth them against the stones"

Yes, very solemnly I repeat to you that in those worst treated children of the English race, I yet see the making of gentlemen and gentlewomen—not the making of dog-stealers and gin-drinkers, such as their parents were, and the child of the average English tradesman or peasant, even at this day, well schooled, will show no innate disposition such as must fetter him for ever to the clod or the counter. You say that many a boy runs away, or would run away if he could, from good positions to go to sea. Of course he does. I never said I should have any difficulty in finding sailors, but I shall in finding fishmongers. I am at no loss for gardeners neither, but what am I to do for greengrocers?

The fact is, a great number of quite necessary employments are, in the accuratest sense, "servile," that is, they sink a man to the condition of a serf, or unthinking worker, the proper state of an animal, but more or less unworthy of men, nay, unholy in some sense, so that a day is made "holy" by the fact of its being commanded, "Thou shalt do no *servile* work therein." And yet, if undertaken in a certain spirit, such work might be the holiest of all. If there were but a thread or two of sound fibre here and there left in our modern religion, so that the stuff of it would bear a real strain, one might address our two opposite groups of evangelicals and ritualists somewhat after this fashion—"Good friends, these differences of opinion between you cannot but be painful to



your Christian charity, and they are unseemly to us, the profane, and prevent us from learning from you what, perhaps, we ought. But, as we read your Book, we, for our part, gather from it that you might, without danger to your own souls, set an undivided example to us, for the benefit of ours. You, both of you, as far as we understand, agree in the necessity of humility to the perfection of your character. We often hear you, of Calvinistic persuasion, speaking of yourselves as 'sinful dust and ashes,'—would it then be inconsistent with your feelings to make yourselves into 'serviceable' dust and ashes? We observe that of late many of our roads have been hardened and mended with cinders, now, if, in a higher sense, you could allow us to mend the roads of the world with *you* a little, it would be a great proof to us of your sincerity. Suppose, only for a little while, in the present difficulty and distress, you were to make it a test of conversion that a man should regularly give Zaccheus's portion, half his goods, to the poor, and at once adopt some disagreeable and despised, but thoroughly useful, trade? You cannot think that this would finally be to your disadvantage, you doubtless believe the texts, 'He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord,' and 'He that would be chief among you, let him be your servant.' The more you parted with, and the lower you stooped, the greater would be your final reward, and final exaltation. You profess to despise human learning and worldly riches, leave both of these to *us*, undertake for us the illiterate and ill-paid employments which must deprive you of the privileges of society, and the pleasures of luxury. You cannot possibly preach your faith so forcibly to the world by any quantity of the finest words, as by a few such simple and painful acts, and over your counters, in honest retail business, you might preach a gospel that would sound in more ears than any that was ever proclaimed over pulpit cushions or tabernacle rails. And, whatever may be your gifts of utterance, you cannot but feel (studying St Paul's Epistles as care-

fully as you do) that you might more easily and modestly emulate the practical teaching of the silent Apostle of the Gentiles than the speech or writing of his companion. Amidst the present discomforts of your brethren you may surely, with greater prospect of good to them, seek the title of Sons of Consolation, than of Sons of Thunder, and be satisfied with Barnabas's confession of faith (if you can reach no farther), who, 'having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet.'

"To you, on the other hand, gentlemen of the embroidered robe, who neither despise learning nor the arts, we know that sacrifices such as these would be truly painful, and might at first appear inexpedient. But the doctrine of self-mortification is not a new one to you, and we should be sorry to think—we would not, indeed, for a moment dishonour you by thinking—that these melodious chants, and prismatic brightnesses of vitreous pictures, and floral graces of deep-wrought stone, were in any wise intended for your own poor pleasures, whatever profane attraction they may exercise on more fleshly-minded persons. And as you have certainly received no definite order for the painting, carving, or lighting up of churches, while the temple of the body of so many poor living Christians is so pale, so mis-shapen, and so ill-lighted, but have, on the contrary, received very definite orders for the feeding and clothing of such sad humanity, we may surely ask you, not unreasonably, to humiliate yourselves in the most complete way—not with a voluntary, but a sternly *in*-voluntary humility—not with a show of wisdom in will-worship, but with practical wisdom, in all honour, to the satisfying of the flesh, and to associate yourselves in monasteries and convents for the better practice of useful and humble trades. Do not burn any more candles, but mould some, do not paint any more windows, but mend a few, where the wind comes in in winter time, with substantial clear glass and putty. Do not vault any more high roofs, but thatch some low ones, and embroider

rather on backs which are turned to the cold, than only on those which are turned to congregations And you will have your reward afterwards, and attain, with all your flocks thus tended, to a place where you may have as much gold, and painted glass, and singing, as you like ”

Thus much, it seems to me, one might say, with some hope of acceptance, to any very earnest member of either of our two great religious parties, if, as I say, their faith could stand a strain I have not, however, based any of my imaginary political arrangements on the probability of its doing so, and I trust only to such general good nature and willingness to help each other, as I presume may be found among men of the world, to whom I should have to make quite another sort of speech, which I will endeavour to set down the heads of, for you, in next letter.

## LETTER XIX

THE GENERAL PRESSURE OF EXCESSIVE AND  
IMPROPER WORK, IN ENGLISH LIFE*April 10, 1867*

I CANNOT go on to-day with the part of my subject I had proposed, for I was disturbed by receiving a letter last night, which I herewith enclose to you, and of which I wish you to print, here following, the parts I have not underlined —

1 PHENÉ STREET, CHELSEA, *April 8, 1867*

My dear R——, —It is long since you have heard of me, and now I ask your patience with me for a little I have but just returned from the funeral of my dear, dear friend ——, the first artist friend I made in London—a loved and prized one For years past he had lived in the very humblest way, fighting his battle of life against mean appreciation of his talents, the wants of a rising family, and frequent attacks of illness, crippling him for months at a time, the wolf at the door meanwhile

But about two years since his prospects brightened and he had but a few weeks since ventured on removal to a larger house His eldest boy of seventeen years, a very intelligent youth, so strongly desired to be a civil engineer that Mr ——, not being able to pay the large premium required for his apprenticeship, had been made very glad by the consent of Mr Penn, of Milwall, to receive him without a premium after the boy should have spent some time at King's College in the study of mechanics The rest is a sad story About a fortnight ago Mr —— was taken ill, and died last week, the doctors say, of sheer physical exhaustion, not thirty-nine years old, leaving eight young children, and his poor widow expecting her confinement, and so weak and ill as to be incapable of effort This youth is the eldest, and the other children range downwards to a babe of eighteen months There is not one who knew him, I believe, ~~that~~ will not give cheerfully, to their ability, for his widow and

children, but such aid will go but a little way in this painful case, but it would be a real boon to this poor widow if some of her children could be got into an Orphan Asylum

If you are able to do anything I would send particulars of the age and sex of the children —I remain, dear Sir, ever obediently yours,

FRED J SHIELDS

P S—I ought to say that poor —— has been quite unable to save, with his large family, and that they would be utterly destitute now, but for the kindness of some with whom he was professionally connected

Now this case, of which you see the entire authenticity, is, out of the many of which I hear continually, a *notably* sad one only in so far as the artist in question has died of distress while he was catering for the public amusement. Hardly a week now passes without some such misery coming to my knowledge, and the quantity of pain, and anxiety of daily effort, through the best part of life, ending all at last in utter grief, which the lower middle classes in England are now suffering, is so great that I feel constantly as if I were living in one great churchyard, with people all round me clinging feebly to the edges of the open graves, and calling for help, as they fall back into them, out of sight

Now I want you to observe here, in a definite case, the working of your beautiful modern political economy of "supply and demand." Here is a man who could have "supplied" you with good and entertaining art,—say for fifty good years,—if you had paid him enough for his day's work to find him and his children peacefully in bread. But you like having your prints as cheap as possible—you triumph in the little that your laugh costs—you take all you can get from the man, give the least you can give to him—and you accordingly kill him at thirty-nine; and thereafter have his children to take care of, or to kill also, whichever you choose: but now, observe, you must take care of *them* for nothing, or not at all, and

what you might have had good value for, if you had given it when it would have cheered the father's heart, you now can have no return for at all, to yourselves, and what you give to the orphans, if it does not degrade them, at least afflicts, coming, not through their father's hand, its honest earnings, but from strangers

Observe farther, whatever help the orphans may receive will not be from the public at all. It will not be from those who profited by their father's labours, it will be chiefly from his fellow labourers, or from persons whose money would have been beneficially spent in other directions, from whence it is drawn away to this need, which ought never to have occurred,—while those who waste their money without doing any service to the public, will never contribute one farthing to this distress

Now it is this double fault in the help—that it comes too late, and that the burden of it falls wholly on those who ought least to be charged with it, which would be corrected by that institution of overseers of which I spoke to you in the twelfth of these letters, saying, you remember, that they were to have farther legal powers, which I did not then specify, but which would belong to them chiefly in the capacity of public almoners, or help-givers, aided by their deacons, the reception of such help, in time of true need, being not held disgraceful, but honourable, since the fact of its reception would be so entirely public that no imposter or idle person could ever obtain it surreptitiously

(11th April) I was interrupted yesterday, and I am glad of it, for here happens just an instance of the way in which the unjust distribution of the burden of charity is reflected on general interests, I cannot help what taint of ungracefulness you or other readers of these letters may feel that I incur, in speaking, in this instance of myself. If I could speak with the same accurate knowledge of any one else, most gladly I would, but I also think it right that, whether people accuse me of boasting or not, they

should know that I practise what I preach. I had not intended to say what I now shall, but the coming of this letter last night just turns the balance of the decision with me. I enclose it with the other, you see it is one from my bookseller, Mr Quaritch, offering me Fischer's work on the *Flora of Java*, and Latour's on *Indian Orchidaceæ*, bound together, for twenty guineas. Now, I am writing a book on botany just now, for young people, chiefly on wild flowers, and I want these two books very much, but I simply cannot afford to buy them, because I sent my last spare twenty guineas to Mr Shields yesterday for this widow. And though you may think it not the affair of the public that I have not this book on Indian flowers, it is their affair finally, that what I write for them should be founded on as broad knowledge as possible, whatever value my own book may or may not have, it will just be in a given degree worth *less* to them, because of my want of this knowledge.

So again—for having begun to speak of myself I will do so yet more frankly—I suppose that when people see my name down for a hundred pounds to the Cruikshank Memorial and for another hundred to the Eyre Defence Fund, they think only that I have more money than I know what to do with. Well, the giving of those subscriptions simply decides the question whether or no I shall be able to afford a journey to Switzerland this year, in the negative, and I wanted to go, not only for health's sake, but to examine the junctions of the molasse sandstones and nagelfluh with the Alpine limestone, in order to complete some notes I meant to publish next spring on the geology of the great northern Swiss valley, notes which must now lie by me at least for another year, and I believe this delay (though I say it) will be really something of a loss to the travelling public, for the little essay was intended to explain to them, in a familiar way, the real wonderfulness of their favourite mountain, the Righi; and to give them some amusement in trying to

find out where the many-coloured pebbles of it had come from But it is more important that I should, with some stoutness, assert my respect for the genius and earnest patriotism of Cruikshank, and my much more than disrespect for the Jamaica Committee, than that I should see the Alps this year, or get my essay finished next spring, but I tell you the fact, because I want you to feel how, in thus leaving their men of worth to be assisted or defended only by those who deeply care for them, the public more or less cripple, to their own ultimate disadvantage, just the people who could serve them in other ways, while the speculators and money-seekers, who are only making their profit out of the said public, of course take no part in the help of anybody And even if the willing bearers could sustain the burden anyway adequately, none of us would complain, but I am certain there is no man, whatever his fortune, who is now engaged in any earnest offices of kindness to these sufferers, especially of the middle class, among his acquaintance, who will not bear me witness that for one we can relieve, we must leave three to perish. I have left three, myself, in the first three months of this year One was the artist Paul Gray, for whom an appeal was made to me for funds to assist him in going abroad out of the bitter English winter I had not the means by me, and he died a week afterwards Another case was that of a widow whose husband had committed suicide, for whom application was made to me at the same time, and the third was a personal friend, to whom I refused a sum which he said would have saved him from bankruptcy. I believe six times as much would not have saved him, however, I refused, and he is ruined.

And observe, also, it is not the mere crippling of my means that I regret It is the crippling of my temper, and waste of my time The knowledge of all this distress, even when I can assist it,—much more when I cannot,—and the various thoughts of what I can and cannot, or ought and ought not, to do, are a far greater burden to



me than the mere loss of the money It is peremptorily not my business—it is not my gift, bodily or mentally, to look after other peoples' sorrow I have enough of my own, and even if I had not, the sight of pain is not good for me I don't want to be a bishop In a most literal and sincere sense, "*nolo episcopari*" I don't want to be an almoner, nor a counsellor, nor a Member of Parliament, nor a voter for Members of Parliament (What would Mr Holyoake say to me if he knew that I have never voted for anybody in my life, and never mean to do so) I am essentially a painter and a leaf dissector, and my powers of thought are all purely mathematical, seizing ultimate principles only—never accidents, a line is always, to me, length without breadth, it is not a cable or a crowbar, and though I can almost infallibly reason out the final law of anything, if within reach of my industry, I neither care for, nor can trace, the minor exigencies of its daily appliance So, in every way, I like a quiet life, and I don't like seeing people cry, or die, and should rejoice, more than I can tell you, in giving up the full half of my fortune for the poor, provided I knew that the public would make Lord Overstone also give the half of his, and other people who were independent give the half of theirs, and then set men who were really fit for such office to administer the fund, and answer to us for nobody's perishing innocently, and so leave us all to do what we chose with the rest, and with our days, in peace.

Thus far of the public's fault in the matter Next, I have a word or two to say of the sufferers' own fault—for much as I pity them, I conceive that none of them *do* perish altogether innocently But this must be for next letter

## LETTER XX

OF IMPROVIDENCE IN MARRIAGE IN THE MIDDLE CLASSES,  
AND OF THE ADVISABLE RESTRICTIONS OF IT*April 12, 1867*

It is quite as well, whatever irregularity it may introduce in the arrangement of the general subject, that yonder sad letter warped me away from the broad inquiry, to this specialty, respecting the present distress of the middle classes. For the immediate cause of that distress, in their own imprudence, of which I have to speak to you to-day, is only to be finally vanquished by strict laws, which, though they have been many a year in my mind, I was glad to have a quiet hour of sunshine for the thinking over again, this morning. Sunshine which happily rose cloudless, and allowed me to meditate my tyrannies before breakfast, under the just opened blossoms of my orchard, and assisted by much melodious advice from the birds, who (my gardener having positive orders never to trouble any of them in anything, or object to their eating even my best pease if they like their flavour) rather now get *into* my way, than out of it, when they see me about the walks, and take me into most of their counsels in nest-building.

The letter from Mr Shields, which interrupted us, reached me, as you see, on the evening of the 9th instant. On the morning of the 10th, I received another, which I herewith forward to you, for verification. It is—characteristically enough—dateless, so you must take the time of its arrival on my word. And substituting M N for the name of the boy referred to, and withholding only the address and name of the writer, you see that it may be printed word for word as follows.—

Sir,—May I beg for the favour of your presentation to Christ's Hospital for my youngest son, M N I have nine children, and no means to educate them I ventured to address you, believing that my husband's name is not unknown to you as an artist — Believe me to remain faithfully yours,

To John Ruskin, Esq

Now this letter is only a typical example of the entire class of those which, being a governor of Christ's Hospital, I receive, in common with all the other governors, at the rate of about three a day, for a month or six weeks from the date of our names appearing in the printed list of the governors who have presentations for the current year Having been a governor now some twenty-five years, I have documentary evidence enough to found some general statistics upon from which there have resulted two impressions on my mind, which I wish here specially to note to you, and I do not doubt but that all the other governors, if you could ask them, would at once confirm what I say My first impression is, a heavy and sorrowful sense of the general feebleness of intellect of that portion of the British public which stands in need of presentations to Christ's Hospital This feebleness of intellect is mainly shown in the nearly total unconsciousness of the writers that anybody else may want a presentation beside themselves With the exception, here and there, of a soldier's or a sailor's widow, hardly one of them seems to have perceived the existence of any distress in the world but their own none know what they are asking for, or imagine, unless as a remote contingency, the possibility of its having been promised at a prior date The second most distinct impression on my mind is, that the portion of the British public which is in need of presentation to Christ's Hospital considers it a merit to have large families, with or without the means of supporting them!

Now it happened also (and remember, all this is strictly true, nor in the slightest particular represented otherwise than as it chanced, though the said chance brought thus

together exactly the evidence I wanted for my letter to you), it happened, I say, that on this same morning of the 10th April, I became accidentally acquainted with a case of quite a different kind that of a noble girl, who, engaged at sixteen, and having received several advantageous offers since, has remained for ten years faithful to her equally faithful lover, while, their circumstances rendering it, as they rightly considered, unjustifiable in them to think of marriage, each of them simply and happily, aided and cheered by the other's love, discharged the duties of their own separate positions in life

In the nature of things, instances of this kind of noble life remain more or less concealed (while imprudence and error proclaim themselves by misfortune), but they are assuredly not unfrequent in our English homes. Let us next observe the political and national result of these arrangements. You leave your marriages to be settled by "supply and demand," instead of wholesome law. And thus among your youths and maidens, the improvident, incontinent, selfish, and foolish ones marry, whether you will or not, and beget families of children, necessarily inheritors in a great degree of these parental dispositions, and for whom, supposing they had the best dispositions in the world, you have thus provided, by way of educators, the foolishest fathers and mothers you could find, (the only rational sentence in their letters, usually, is the invariable one, in which they declare themselves "incapable of providing for their children's education"). On the other hand, whosoever is wise, patient, unselfish, and pure, among your youth, you keep maid or bachelor, wasting their best days of natural life in painful sacrifice, forbidding them their best help and best reward, and carefully excluding their prudence and tenderness from any offices of parental duty.

Is not this a beatific and beautifully sagacious system for a Celestial Empire, such as that of these British isles?

I will not here enter into any statement of the physical

laws which it is the province of our physicians to explain, and which are indeed at last so far beginning to be understood, that there is hope of the nation's giving some of the attention to the conditions affecting the race of man, which it has hitherto bestowed only on those which may better its races of cattle

It is enough, I think, to say here that the beginning of all sanitary and moral law is in the regulation of marriage, and that, ugly and fatal as is every form and agency of licence, no licentiousness is so mortal as licentiousness in marriage

Briefly, then, and in main points, subject in minor ones to such modifications in detail as local circumstances and characters would render expedient, these following are laws such as a prudent nation would institute respecting its marriages. Permission to marry should be the reward held in sight of its youth during the entire latter part of the course of their education, and it should be granted as the national attestation that the first portion of their lives has been rightly fulfilled. It should not be attainable without earnest and consistent effort, though put within the reach of all who were willing to make such effort, and the granting of it should be a public testimony to the fact, that the youth or maid to whom it was given had lived, within their proper sphere, a modest and virtuous life, and had attained such skill in their proper handicraft, and in arts of household economy, as might give well-founded expectations of their being able honourably to maintain and teach their children.

No girl should receive her permission to marry before her 17th birthday, nor any youth before his 21st, and it should be a point of somewhat distinguished honour with both sexes to gain their permission of marriage in the 18th and 22nd year, and a recognised disgrace not to have gained it at least before the close of their 21st and 24th. I do not mean that they should in any wise hasten actual marriage, but that they should hold it a point of honour

to have the right to marry In every year there should be two festivals, one on the first of May, and one at the feast of harvest home in each district, at which festivals their permissions to marry should be given publicly to the maidens and youths who had won them in that half year, and they should be crowned, the maids by the old French title of Rosières, and the youths, perhaps by some name rightly derived from one supposed signification of the word "bachelor" "laurel fruit," and so led in joyful procession, with music and singing, through the city street or village lane, and the day ended with feasting of the poor but not with feasting theirs, except quietly, at their homes

And every bachelor and rosière should be entitled to claim, if they needed it, according to their position in life, a fixed income from the State, for seven years from the day of their marriage, for the setting up of their homes, and, however rich they might be by inheritance, their income should not be permitted to exceed a given sum, proportioned to their rank, for the seven years following that in which they had obtained their permission to marry, but should accumulate in the trust of the State, until that seventh year, in which they should be put (on certain conditions) finally in possession of their property, and the men, thus necessarily not before their twenty-eighth, nor usually later than their thirty-first year, become eligible to offices of State So that the rich and poor should not be sharply separated in the beginning of the war of life, but the one supported against the first stress of it long enough to enable them by proper forethought and economy to secure their footing, and the other trained somewhat in the use of moderate means, before they were permitted to have the command of abundant ones. And of the sources from which these State incomes for the married poor should be supplied, or of the treatment of those of our youth whose conduct rendered it advisable to refuse them permission to marry, I defer what I have to say till we come to the general

subject of taxation and criminal discipline, leaving the proposals made in this letter to bear, for the present, whatever aspect of mere romance and unrealisable vision they probably may, and to most readers, such as they assuredly will. Nor shall I make the slightest effort to redeem them from these imputations, for though there is nothing in all their purport which would not be approved, as in the deepest sense "practical"—by the "Spirit of Paradise"—

Which gives to all the self-same bent,  
Whose lives are wise and innocent,

—and though I know that national justice in conduct, and peace in heart, could by no other laws be so swiftly secured, I confess with much *dis*peace of heart, that both justice and happiness have at this day become, in England, "romantic impossibilities."

## LETTER XXI

OF THE DIGNITY OF THE FOUR FINE ARTS, AND OF  
THE PROPER SYSTEM OF RETAIL TRADE

April 15, 1867

I RETURN now to the part of the subject at which I was interrupted—the inquiry as to the proper means of finding persons willing to maintain themselves and others by degrading occupations

That, on the whole, simply manual occupations *are* degrading, I suppose I may assume you to admit, at all events, the fact is so, and I suppose few general readers will have any doubt of it <sup>12</sup>

Granting this, it follows as a direct consequence that it is the duty of all persons in higher stations of life, by every means in their power, to diminish their demand for work of such kind, *and to live with as little and from the lower trades* as they can possibly contrive

I suppose you see that this conclusion is not a little at variance with received notions on political economy? It is popularly supposed that it benefits a nation to invent a want. But the fact is, that the true benefit is in extinguishing a want—in living with as few wants as possible

I cannot tell you the contempt I feel for the common writers on political economy, in their stupefied missing of this first principle of all human economy—individual or political—to live, namely, with as few wants as possible,

<sup>12</sup> Many of my working readers have disputed this statement eagerly, feeling the good effect of work in themselves, but observe, I only say, *simply* or *totally* manual work, and that, alone, *is* degrading, though often in measure refreshing, wholesome, and necessary. So it is highly necessary and wholesome to eat sometimes, but degrading to eat all day, as to labour with the hands all day. But it is not degrading to think all day—if you can. A highly bred court lady, rightly interested in politics and literature, is a much finer type of the human creature than a servant of all work, however clever and honest



and to waste nothing of what is given you to supply them

This ought to be the first lesson of every rich man's political code "Sir," his tutor should early say to him, "you are so placed in society—it may be for your misfortune, it *must* be for your trial—that you are likely to be maintained all your life by the labour of other men You will have to make shoes for nobody, but some one will have to make a great many for you You will have to dig ground for nobody, but some one will have to dig through every summer's hot day for you You will build houses and make clothes for no one, but many a rough hand must knead clay, and many an elbow be crooked to the stitch, to keep that body of yours warm and fine Now remember, whatever you and your work may be worth, the less your keep costs the better It does not cost money only It costs degradation You do not merely employ these people You also tread upon them It cannot be helped,—you have your place, and they have theirs, but see that you tread as lightly as possible, and on as few as possible What food, and clothes, and lodging, you honestly need, for your health and peace, you may righteously take See that you take the plainest you can serve yourself with—that you waste or wear nothing vainly,—and that you employ no man in furnishing you with any useless luxury" That is the first lesson of Christian—or human—economy, and depend upon it, my friend, it is a sound one, and has every voice and vote of the spirits of Heaven and earth to back it, whatever views the Manchester men, or any other manner of men, may take respecting "demand and supply" Demand what you deserve, and you shall be supplied with it, for your good Demand what you do *not* deserve, and you shall be supplied with something which you have not demanded, and which Nature perceives that you deserve, quite to the contrary of your good That is the law of your existence, and if you do not make it the law of your

resolved acts—so much, precisely, the worse for you and all connected with you

Yet observe, though it is out of its proper place said here, this law forbids no luxury which men are not degraded in providing You may have Paul Veronese to paint your ceiling, if you like, or Benvenuto Cellini to make cups for you But you must not employ a hundred divers to find beads to stitch over your sleeve (Did you see the account of the sales of the Esterhazy jewels the other day?)

And the degree in which you recognise the difference between these two kinds of services, is precisely what makes the difference between your being a civilised person or a barbarian If you keep slaves to furnish forth your dress—to glut your stomach—sustain your indolence—or deck your pride, you are a barbarian If you keep servants, properly cared for, to furnish you with what you verily want, and no more than that—you are a “civil” person—a person capable of the qualities of citizenship. (Just look to the note on Liebig’s idea that civilisation means the consumption of coal, in the *Crown of Wild Olive*,<sup>13</sup> and please observe the sentence at the end of it, which signifies a good deal of what I have to expand here,—“Civilisation is the making of civil persons”)

Now, farther, observe that in a truly civilised and disciplined state, no man would be allowed to meddle with any material who did not know how to make the best of it In other words, the arts of working in wood, clay, stone, and metal, would all be *fine* arts (working in iron for machinery becoming an entirely distinct business) There would be no joiner’s work, no smith’s, no pottery nor stone-cutting, so debased in character as to be entirely unconnected with the finer branches of the same art, and to at least one of these finer branches (generally in metal-work) every painter and sculptor would be necessarily apprenticed during some years of his education There would be room, in these four trades alone, for nearly

every grade of practical intelligence and productive imagination

But it should not be artists alone who are exercised early in these crafts. It would be part of my scheme of physical education that every youth in the state—from the King's son downwards,—should learn to do something finely and thoroughly with his hand, so as to let him know what *touch* meant, and what stout craftsmanship meant, and to inform him of many things besides, which no man can learn but by some severely accurate discipline in doing. Let him once learn to take a straight shaving off a plank, or draw a fine curve without faltering, or lay a brick level in its mortar, and he has learned a multitude of other matters which no lips of man could ever teach him. He might choose his craft, but whatever it was, he should learn it to some sufficient degree of true dexterity and the result would be, in after life, that among the middle classes a good deal of their house furniture would be made, and a good deal of rough work, more or less clumsily, but not ineffectively, got through, by the master himself and his sons, with much furtherance of their general health and peace of mind, and increase of innocent domestic pride and pleasure, and to the extinction of a great deal of vulgar upholstery and other mean handicraft.

Farther. A great deal of the vulgarity, and nearly all the vice, of retail commerce, involving the degradation of persons occupied in it, depends simply on the fact that their minds are always occupied by the vital (or rather mortal) question of profits. I should at once put an end to this source of baseness by making all retail dealers merely salaried officers in the employ of the trade guilds, the stewards, that is to say, of the saleable properties of those guilds, and purveyors of such and such articles to a given number of families. A perfectly well-educated person might without the least degradation hold such an office as this, however poorly paid, and it would be precisely the fact of his being well educated which would

enable him to fulfil his duties to the public without the stimulus of direct profit. Of course the current objection to such a system would be that no man, for a regularly paid salary, would take pains to please his customers, and the answer to that objection is, that if you can train a man to so much unselfishness as to offer himself fearlessly to the chance of being shot, in the course of his daily duty, you can most assuredly, if you make it also a point of honour with him, train him to the amount of self-denial involved in looking you out with care such a piece of cheese or bacon as you have asked for.

You see that I have already much diminished the number of employments involving degradation, and raised the character of many of those that are left. There remain to be considered the necessarily painful or mechanical works of mining, forging, and the like—the unclean, noisome, or paltry manufactures—the various kinds of transport—(by merchant shipping, etc.)—and the conditions of menial service.

It will facilitate the examination of these if we put them for the moment aside, and pass to the other division of our dilemma, the question, namely, what kind of lives our gentlemen and ladies are to live, for whom all this hard work is to be done.

## LETTER XXII

## OF THE NORMAL POSITION AND DUTIES OF THE UPPER CLASSES—GENERAL STATEMENT OF THE LAND QUESTION

*April 17, 1867*

IN passing now to the statement of conditions affecting the interests of the upper classes, I would rather have addressed these closing letters to one of themselves than to you, for it is with their own faults and needs that each class is primarily concerned. As, however, unless I kept the letters private, this change of their address would be but a matter of courtesy and form, not of any true prudential use, and as besides I am now no more inclined to reticence—prudent or otherwise, but desire only to state the facts of our national economy as clearly and completely as may be, I pursue the subject without respect of persons.

Before examining what the occupation and estate of the upper classes ought, as far as may reasonably be conjectured, finally to become, it will be well to set down in brief terms what they actually have been in past ages for this, in many respects, they must also always be. The upper classes, broadly speaking, are always originally composed of the best-bred (in the merely animal sense of the term), the most energetic, and most thoughtful, of the population, who either by strength of arm seize the land from the rest, and make slaves of them, or bring desert land into cultivation, over which they have therefore, within certain limits, true personal right, or by industry accumulate other property, or by choice devote themselves to intellectual pursuits, and, though poor, obtain an acknowledged superiority of position, shown by benefits conferred in discovery, or in teaching, or in gifts

of art This is all in the simple course of the law of nature, and the proper offices of the upper classes, thus distinguished from the rest, become, therefore, in the main threefold —

(A) Those who are strongest of arm have for their proper function the restraint and punishment of vice, and the general maintenance of law and order, releasing only from its original subjection to their power that which truly deserves to be emancipated

(B) Those who are superior by forethought and industry, have for their function to be the providences of the foolish, the weak, and the idle, and to establish such systems of trade and distribution of goods as shall preserve the lower orders from perishing by famine, or any other consequence of their carelessness or folly, and to bring them all, according to each man's capacity, at last into some harmonious industry

(C) The third class, of scholars and artists, of course have for function the teaching and delighting of the inferior multitude

The office of the upper classes, then, as a body, is to keep order among their inferiors, and raise them always to the nearest level with themselves of which those inferiors are capable So far as they are thus occupied, they are invariably loved and revered intensely by all beneath them, and reach, themselves, the highest types of human power and beauty

This, then, being the natural ordinance and function of aristocracy, its corruption, like that of all other beautiful things under the Devil's touch, is a very fearful one Its corruption is, that those who ought to be the rulers and guides of the people forsake their task of painful honourableness; seek their own pleasure and pre-eminence only, and use their power, subtlety, conceded influence, prestige of ancestry, and mechanical instrumentality of martial power, to make the lower orders toil for them, and feed and clothe them for nothing, and become in various ways

their living property, goods, and chattels, even to the point of utter regardlessness of whatever misery these serfs may suffer through such insolent domination, or they themselves, their masters, commit of crime to enforce it

And this is especially likely to be the case when means of various and tempting pleasure are put within the reach of the upper classes by advanced conditions of national commerce and knowledge and it is *certain* to be the case as soon as position among those upper classes becomes any way purchaseable with money, instead of being the assured measure of some kind of worth (either strength of hand, or true wisdom of conduct, or imaginative gift) It has been becoming more and more the condition of the aristocracy of Europe, ever since the fifteenth century, and is gradually bringing about its ruin, and in that ruin, checked only by the power which here and there a good soldier or true statesman achieves over the putrid chaos of its vain policy, the ruin of all beneath it, which can be arrested only, either by the repentance of that old aristocracy (hardly to be hoped), or by the stern substitution of other aristocracy worthier than it Corrupt as it may be, it and its laws together, I would at this moment, if I could, fasten every one of its institutions down with bands of iron, and trust for all progress and help against its tyranny simply to the patience and strength of private conduct. And if I had to choose, I would tenfold rather see the tyranny of old Austria triumphant in the old and new worlds, and trust to the chance (or rather the distant certainty) of some day seeing a true Emperor born to its throne, than, with every privilege of thought and act, run the most distant risk of seeing the thoughts of the people of Germany and England become like the thoughts of the people of America <sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> My American friends, of whom one, Charles Eliot Norton, of Cambridge, is the best I have in the world, tell me I know nothing about America It may be so, and they must do me the justice to observe that I, therefore, usually say nothing about America But this I say, because the Americans as a nation set their trust in liberty and in equality, of which I detest the one, and deny the possibility of the other, and because, also, as a nation, they are wholly undesirous of

But, however corrupted, the aristocracy of any nation may thus be always divided into three great classes. First, the landed proprietors and soldiers, essentially one political body (for the possession of land can only be maintained by military power), secondly, the monied men and leaders of commerce, thirdly, the professional men and masters in science, art, and literature.

And we were to consider the proper duties of all these, and the laws probably expedient respecting them. Whereupon, in the outset we are at once brought face to face with the great land question.

Great as it may be, it is wholly subordinate to those we have hitherto been considering. The laws you make regarding methods of labour, or to secure the genuineness of the things produced by it, affect the entire moral state of the nation, and all possibility of human happiness for them. The mode of distribution of the land only affects their numbers. By this or that law respecting land, you decide whether the nation shall consist of fifty or of a hundred millions. But by this or that law respecting work, you decide whether the given number of millions shall be rogues, or honest men,—shall be wretches, or happy men. And the question of numbers is wholly immaterial, compared with that of character, or rather, its own materialness depends on the prior determination of character. Make your nation consist of knaves, and,

Rest, and incapable of it, irreverent of themselves, both in the present and in the future, discontented with what they are, yet having no ideal of anything which they desire to become, as the tide of the troubled sea, when it *cannot* rest.

Some following passages in this letter, containing personal references which might, in permanence, have given pain or offence, are now omitted—the substance of them being also irrelevant to my main purpose. These few words about the American war, with which they concluded, are, I think, worth retaining—“All methods of right Government are to be communicated to foreign nations by perfectness of example and gentleness of patiently expanded power, not suddenly, nor at the bayonet's point. And though it is the duty of every nation to interfere, at bayonet point, if they have the strength to do so, to save any oppressed multitude, or even individual, from manifest violence, it is wholly unlawful to interfere in such matter, except with sacredly pledged limitation of the objects to be accomplished in the oppressed persons' favour, and with absolute refusal of all selfish advantage and *increase of territory or of political power* which might otherwise accrue from the victory.”



as Emerson said long ago, it is but the case of any other vermin—"the more, the worse" Or, to put the matter in narrower limits, it is a matter of no final concern to any parent whether he shall have two children, or four, but matter of quite final concern whether those he has, shall, or shall not, deserve to be hanged The great difficulty in dealing with the land question at all arises from the false, though very natural, notion on the part of many reformers, and of large bodies of the poor, that the division of the land among the said poor would be an immediate and everlasting relief to them An *immediate* relief it would be to the extent of a small annual sum (you may easily calculate how little, if you choose) to each of them, on the strength of which accession to their finances, they would multiply into as much extra personality as the extra pence would sustain, and at that point be checked by starvation, exactly as they are now

Any other form of pillage would benefit them only in like manner, and in reality the difficult part of the question respecting numbers is not where they shall be arrested, but what shall be the method of their arrest

An island of a certain size has standing room only for so many people, feeding ground for a great many fewer than could stand on it Reach the limits of your feeding ground, and you must cease to multiply, must emigrate, or starve The modes in which the pressure is gradually brought to bear on the population depend on the justice of your laws, but the pressure itself must come at last, whatever the distribution of the land And arithmeticians seem to me a little slow to remark the importance of the old child's puzzle about the nails in the horseshoe—when it is populations that are doubling themselves, instead of farthings

The essential land question then is to be treated quite separately from that of the methods of restriction of population The land question is—At what point will you resolve to stop? It is separate matter of discussion how you are to stop at it

And this essential land question—"At what point will you stop?"—is itself twofold. You have to consider first, by what methods of land distribution you can maintain the greatest number of healthy persons, and secondly, whether, if by any other mode of distribution and relative ethical laws, you can raise their character, while you diminish their numbers, such sacrifice should be made, and to what extent? I think it will be better, for clearness sake, to end this letter with the putting of these two queries in their decisive form, and to reserve suggestions of answer for my next.

## LETTER XXIII

OF THE JUST TENURE OF LANDS AND THE PROPER  
FUNCTIONS OF HIGH PUBLIC OFFICERS*20th April, 1867*

I MUST repeat to you, once more, before I proceed, that I only enter on this part of our inquiry to complete the sequence of its system, and explain fully the bearing of former conclusions, and not for any immediately practicable good to be got out of the investigation. Whatever I have hitherto urged upon you, it is in the power of all men quietly to promote, and finally to secure, by the patient resolution of personal conduct, but no action could be taken in redistribution of land, or in limitation of the incomes of the upper classes, without grave and prolonged civil disturbance.

Such disturbance, however, is only too likely to take place if the existing theories of political economy are allowed credence much longer. In the writings of the vulgar economists, nothing more excites my indignation than the subterfuges by which they endeavour to accommodate their pseudo-science to the existing abuses of wealth, by disguising the true nature of rent. I will not waste time in exposing their fallacies, but will put the truth for you into as clear a shape as I can.

Rent, of whatever kind, is, briefly, the price continuously paid for the loan of the property of another person. It may be too little, or it may be just, or exorbitant, or altogether unjustifiable, according to circumstances. Exorbitant rents can only be exacted from ignorant or necessitous rent-payers, and it is one of the most necessary conditions of State economy that there should be clear laws to prevent such exaction.

I may interrupt myself for a moment to give you an instance of what I mean. The most wretched houses of the poor in London often pay ten or fifteen per cent to the landlord, and I have known an instance of sanitary legislation being hindered, to the loss of many hundreds of lives, in order that the rents of a nobleman, derived from the necessities of the poor, might not be diminished. And it is a curious thing to me to see Mr J S Mill foaming at the mouth, and really afflicted conscientiously, because he supposes one man to have been unjustly hanged, while by his own failure (I believe, *wilful* failure) in stating clearly to the public one of the first elementary truths of the science he professes, he is aiding and abetting the commission of the cruellest possible form of murder on many thousands of persons yearly, for the sake simply of putting money into the pockets of the landlords. I felt this evil so strongly that I bought, in the worst part of London, one freehold and one leasehold property consisting of houses inhabited by the lowest poor, in order to try what change in their comfort and habits I could effect by taking only a just rent, but that firmly. The houses of the leasehold pay me five per cent, the families that used to have one room in them have now two, and are more orderly and hopeful besides, and there is a surplus still on the rents they pay, after I have taken my five per cent, with which, if all goes well, they will eventually be able to buy twelve years of the lease from me. The freehold pays three per cent, with similar results in the comfort of the tenant. This is merely an example of what might be done by firm State action in such matters.

Next, of wholly unjustifiable rents. These are for things which are not, and which it is criminal to consider as, personal or exchangeable property. Bodies of men, land, water, and air, are the principal of these things.

Parenthetically, may I ask you to observe, that though a fearless defender of some forms of slavery, I am no defender of the slave *trade*. It is by a blundering confusion

of ideas between *governing* men, and *trading* in men, and by consequent interference with the restraint, instead of only with the sale, that most of the great errors in action have been caused among the emancipation men. I am prepared, if the need be clear to my own mind, and if the power is in my hands, to throw men into prison, or any other captivity—to bind them or to beat them—and force them for such periods, as I may judge necessary, to any kind of irksome labour and on occasion of desperate resistance, to hang or shoot them. But I will not *sell* them.

Bodies of men, or women, then (and much more, as I said before, their souls), must not be bought or sold. Neither must land, nor water, nor air.

Yet all these may on certain terms be bound, or secured in possession, to particular persons under certain conditions. For instance, it may be proper at a certain time to give a man permission to possess land, as you give him permission to marry, and farther, if he wishes it and works for it, to secure to him the land needful for his life, as you secure his wife to him, and make both utterly his own, without in the least admitting his right to buy other people's wives, or fields, or to sell his own.

And the right action of a State respecting its land is, indeed, to secure it in various portions to those of its citizens who deserve to be trusted with it, according to their respective desires, and proved capacities, and after having so secured it to each, to exercise only such vigilance over his treatment of it as the State must give also to his treatment of his wife and servants, for the most part leaving him free, but interfering in cases of gross mismanagement or abuse of power. And in the case of great old families, which always ought to be, and in some measure, however decadent, still truly are, the noblest monumental architecture of the kingdom, living temples of sacred tradition and hero's religion, so much land ought to be granted to them in perpetuity as may enable them to live

thereon with all circumstances of state and outward nobleness, *but their income must in no wise be derived from the rents of it*, nor must they be occupied (even in the most distant or subordinately administered methods), in the exaction of rents That is not noblemen's work Their income must be fixed, and paid them by the State, as the King's is

So far from their land being to them a source of income, it should be, on the whole, costly to them, being kept over great part of it in conditions of natural grace, which return no rent but their loveliness, and the rest made, at whatever cost, exemplary in perfection of such agriculture as develops the happiest peasant life, agriculture which, as I will show you hereafter, must reject the aid of all mechanism except that of instruments guided solely by the human hand, or by animal, or directly natural forces, and which, therefore, cannot compete for profitableness with agriculture carried on by aid of machinery

And now for the occupation of this body of men, maintained at fixed perennial cost of the State

You know I said I should want no soldiers of special skill or pugnacity, for all my boys would be soldiers But I assuredly want *captains* of soldiers of special skill and pugnacity And also, I said I should strongly object to the appearance of any lawyers in my territory Meaning, however, by lawyers, people who live by arguing about law—not people appointed to administer law, and people who live by eloquently misrepresenting facts—not people appointed to discover and plainly represent them

Therefore, the youth of this landed aristocracy are to be trained in my schools to these two great callings, not *by* which, but *in* which, they are to live

They are to be trained, all of them, in perfect science of war, and in perfect science of essential law And from their body are to be chosen the captains and the judges of England, its advocates, and generally its State officers, all such functions being held for fixed pay (as already our

officers of the Church and army are paid), and no function connected with the administration of law ever paid by casual fee And the head of such family should, in his own right, having passed due (and high) examination in the science of law, and not otherwise, be a judge, law-ward or Lord, having jurisdiction both in civil and criminal cases, such as our present judges have, after such case shall have been fully represented before, and received verdict from, a jury, composed exclusively of the middle or lower orders, and in which no member of the aristocracy should sit But from the decision of these juries, or from the Lord's sentence, there should be a final appeal to a tribunal, the highest in the land, held solely in the King's name, and over which, in the capital, the King himself should preside, and therein give judgment on a fixed number of days in each year, and in other places and at other times, Judges appointed by election (under certain conditions) out of any order of men in the State (the election being national, not provincial), and all causes brought before these judges should be decided, without appeal, by their own authority, not by juries This, then, recasting it for you into brief view, would be the entire scheme of state authorities —

1 The King exercising, as part both of his prerogative and his duty, the office of a supreme judge at stated times in the central court of appeal of his kingdom

2 Supreme judges appointed by national election, exercising sole authority in courts of final appeal

3 Ordinary judges, holding the office hereditarily under conditions, and with power to add to their number (and liable to have it increased if necessary by the King's appointment) the office of such judges being to administer the national laws under the decision of juries

4. State officers charged with the direction of public agency in matters of public utility

5. Bishops, charged with offices of supervision and aid, to family by family, and person by person

6 The officers of war, of various ranks

7 The officers of public instruction, of various ranks

I have sketched out this scheme for you somewhat prematurely, for I would rather have conducted you to it step by step, and as I brought forward the reasons for the several parts of it, but it is on other grounds desirable that you should have it to refer to, as I go on

Without depending anywise upon nomenclature, yet holding it important as a sign and record of the meanings of things, I may tell you further that I should call the elected supreme Judges, "Princes," the hereditary Judges, "Lords," and the officers of public guidance, "Dukes," and that the social rank of these persons would be very closely correspondent to that implied by such titles under our present constitution, only much more real and useful. And in conclusion of this letter, I will but add, that if you, or other readers, think it idle of me to write or dream of such things, as if any of them were in our power, or within possibility of any near realisation, and above all, vain to write of them to a workman at Sunderland you are to remember what I told you at the beginning, that I go on with this part of my subject in some fulfilment of my long-conceived plan, too large to receive at present any deliberate execution from my failing strength, (being the body of the work to which *Munera Pulveris* was intended merely for an introduction,) and that I address it to you because I know that the working men of England must for some time be the only body to which we can look for resistance to the deadly influence of monied power.

I intend, however, to write to you at this moment one more letter, partly explanatory of minor details necessarily omitted in this, and chiefly of the proper office of the soldier; and then I must delay the completion of even this poor task until after the days have turned, for I have quite other work to do in the brightness of the full-opened spring.



P.S.—As I have used somewhat strong language, both here and elsewhere, of the equivocations of the economists on the subject of rent, I had better refer you to one characteristic example. You will find in paragraph 5th and 6th of Book II, chap. 11, of Mr. Mill's *Principles*, that the right to tenure of land is based, by his admission, only on the proprietor's being its improver.

Without pausing to dwell on the objection that land cannot be improved beyond a certain point, and that, at the reaching of that point, farther claim to tenure would cease, on Mr. Mill's principle,—take even this admission, with its proper subsequent conclusion, that “in no sound theory of private property was it ever contemplated that the proprietor of land should be merely a sinecurist quartered on it.” Now, had that conclusion been farther followed, it would have compelled the admission that all rent was unjustifiable which normally maintained any person in idleness, which is indeed the whole truth of the matter. But Mr. Mill instantly retreats from this perilous admission, and after three or four pages of discussion (quite accurate for *its* part) of the limits of power in management of the land itself (which apply just as strictly to the peasant proprietor as to the cottier's landlord), he begs the whole question at issue in one brief sentence, slipped cunningly into the middle of a long one which appears to be telling all the other way, and in which the fatal assertion (of the right to rent) nestles itself, as if it had been already proved,—thus—I italicise the unproved assertion in which the venom of the entire falsehood is concentrated.

“Even in the case of cultivated land, a man whom, though only one among millions, the law permits to hold thousands of acres as his single share, is not entitled to think that all this is given to him to use and abuse, and deal with it as if it concerned nobody but himself. *The rents or profits which he can obtain from it are his, and his only*, but with regard to the land, in everything which he

abstains from doing, he is morally bound, and should, whenever the case admits, be legally compelled, to make his interest and pleasure consistent with the public good "

I say, this sentence in italics is slipped *cunningly* into the long sentence, as if it were of no great consequence, and above I have expressed my belief that Mr Mill's equivocations on this subject are wilful. It is a grave accusation, but I cannot, by any stretch of charity, attribute these misrepresentations to absolute dulness and bluntness of brain, either in Mr Mill or his follower, Mr Fawcett. Mr Mill is capable of immense involuntary error, but his involuntary errors are usually owing to his seeing only one or two of the many sides of a thing not to obscure sight of the side he *does* see. Thus, his *Essay on Liberty* only takes cognisance of facts that make for liberty, and of none that make for restraint. But in its statement of all that can be said for liberty, it is so clear and keen that I have myself quoted it before now as the best authority on that side. And if arguing in favour of Rent, absolutely, and with clear explanation of what it was, he had then defended it with all his might, I should have attributed to him only the honest short-sightedness of partisanship, but when I find his defining sentences full of subtle entanglement and reserve—and that reserve held throughout his treatment of this particular subject,—I cannot, whether I utter the suspicion or not, keep the sense of wilfulness in the misrepresentation from remaining in my mind. And if there be indeed ground for this blame, and Mr Mill, for fear of fostering political agitation,<sup>15</sup> has disguised what he knows to be the facts about rent, I would ask him as one of the leading members of the Jamaica Committee, which is the greater crime, boldly to sign warrant for the sudden death of one

<sup>15</sup> With at last the natural consequences of cowardice,—nitro-glycerine and fireballs! Let the upper classes speak the truth about themselves boldly, and they will know how to defend themselves fearlessly. It is equivocation in principle, and dereliction from duty, which melt at last into tears in a mob's presence. —(Dec 16th, 1867)

man, known to be an agitator, in the immediate outbreak of such agitation, or by equivocation in a scientific work, to sign warrants for the deaths of thousands of men in slow misery, for *fear* of an agitation which has not begun, and if begun, would be carried on by debate, not by the sword?

## LETTER XXIV

## THE OFFICE OF THE SOLDIER

*April 22, 1867*

I MUST once more deprecate your probable supposition that I bring forward this ideal plan of State government, either with any idea of its appearing, to our present public mind, practicable even at a remote period, or with any positive and obstinate adherence to the particular form suggested. There are no wiser words among the many wise ones of the most rational and keen-sighted of old English men of the world, than these —

“For forms of government let fools contest,  
That which is best administered is best.”

For, indeed, no form of government is of any use among bad men, and any form will work in the hands of the good, but the essence of all government among good men is this, that it is mainly occupied in the production and recognition of human worth, and in the detection and extinction of human unworthiness, and every Government which produces and recognises worth, will also inevitably use the worth it has found to govern with, and therefore fall into some approximation to such a system as I have described. And, as I told you, I do not contend for names, nor particular powers—though I state those which seem to me most advisable, on the contrary, I know that the precise extent of authorities must be different in every nation at different times, and ought to be so, according to their circumstances and character, and all that I assert with confidence is the necessity, within afterwards definable limits, of *some such* authorities as these, that is to say,

I An *observant* one —by which all men shall be looked after and taken note of

II A *helpful* one, from which those who need help may get it

III A *prudent* one, which shall not let people dig in wrong places for coal, nor make railroads where they are not wanted, and which shall also, with true providence, insist on their digging in right places for coal, in a safe manner, and making railroads where they *are* wanted.

IV A *martial* one, which will punish knaves, and make idle persons work

V An *instructive* one, which shall tell everybody what it is their duty to know, and be ready pleasantly to answer questions if anybody asks them

VI A *deliberate* and *decisive* one, which shall judge by law, and amend or make law,

VII An *exemplary* one, which shall show what is loveliest in the art of life

You may divide or name those several offices as you will, or they may be divided in practice as expediency may recommend, the plan I have stated merely puts them all into the simplest forms and relations.

You see I have just defined the martial power as that “which punishes knaves and makes idle persons work” For that is indeed the ultimate and perennial soldiership, that is the essential warrior’s office to the end of time “There is no discharge in that war” To the compelling of sloth, and the scourging of sin, the strong hand will have to address itself as long as this wretched little dusty and volcanic world breeds nettles, and spits fire The soldier’s office at present is indeed supposed to be the defence of his country against other countries, but that is an office which—Utopian as you may think the saying—will soon now be extinct I say so fearlessly, though I say it with wide war threatened, at this moment, in the East and West For observe what the standing of nations on their defence really means It means that, but for

such armed attitude, each of them would go and rob the other, that is to say, that the majority of active persons in every nation are at present—thieves. I am very sorry that this should still be so, but it will not be so long. National exhibitions, indeed, will not bring peace, but national education will, and that is soon coming. I can judge of this by my own mind, for I am myself naturally as covetous a person as lives in this world, and am as eagerly minded to go and steal some things the French have got, as any housebreaker could be, having clue to attractive spoons. If I could by military incursion carry off Paul Veronese's "Marriage in Cana," and the "Venus Victrix," and the "Hours of St Louis," it would give me the profoundest satisfaction to accomplish the foray successfully, nevertheless, being a comparatively educated person, I should most assuredly not give myself that satisfaction, though there were not an ounce of gunpowder, nor a bayonet, in all France. I have not the least mind to rob anybody, however much I may covet what they have got, and I know that the French and British public may and will, with many other publics, be at last brought to be of this mind also, and to see farther that a nation's real strength and happiness do not depend on properties and territories, nor on machinery for their defence, but on their getting such territory as they *have* well filled with none but respectable persons. Which is a way of *infinitely* enlarging one's territory, feasible to every potentate, and dependent no wise on getting Trent turned, or Rhine-edge reached.

Not but that, in the present state of things, it may often be soldiers' duty to seize territory, and hold it strongly, but only from banditti, or savage and idle persons.

Thus, both Calabria and Greece ought to have been irresistibly occupied long ago. Instead of quarrelling with Austria about Venice, the Italians ought to have made a truce with her for ten years, on condition only of her destroying no monuments, and not taxing Italians more

than Germans, and then thrown the whole force of their army on Calabria, shot down every bandit in it in a week, and forced the peasantry of it into honest work on every hill side, with stout and immediate help from the soldiers in embanking streams, building walls, and the like, and Italian finance would have been a much pleasanter matter for the King to take account of by this time, and a fleet might have been floating under Garganus strong enough to sweep every hostile sail out of the Adriatic, instead of a disgraced and useless remnant of one, about to be put up to auction

And similarly, *we* ought to have occupied Greece instantly, when they asked us, whether Russia liked it or not, given them an English king, made good roads for them, and stout laws, and kept them, and their hills and seas, with righteous shepherding of Arcadian fields, and righteous ruling of Salaminian wave, until they could have given themselves a Greek king of men again, and obeyed him, like men

*April 24*

It is strange that just before I finish work for this time, there comes the first real and notable sign of the victory of the principles I have been fighting for these seven years. It is only a newspaper paragraph, but it means much. Look at the second column of the 11th page of yesterday's *Pall Mall Gazette*. The paper has taken a wonderful fit of misprinting lately (unless my friend John Simon has been knighted on his way to Weimar, which would be much too right and good a thing to be a likely one), but its straws of talk mark which way the wind blows perhaps more early than those of any other journal—and look at the question it puts in that page, "Whether political economy be the sordid and materialistic science some account it, or almost the noblest on which thought can be employed?" Might not you as well have determined that question a little while ago, friend Public? and known

what political economy *was*, before you talked so much about it?

But, hark, again—"Ostentation, parental pride, and a host of moral" (immoral?) "qualities must be recognised as among the springs of industry, political economy should not ignore these, but, to discuss them, *it must abandon its pretensions to the precision of a pure science*"

Well done the *Pall Mall*! Had it written "Prudence and parental affection," instead of "Ostentation and parental pride," "must be recognised among the springs of industry," it would have been still better, and it would then have achieved the expression of a part of the truth, which I put into clear terms in the first sentence of *Unto this Last*, in the year 1862—which it has thus taken five years to get half way into the public's head

"Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious—certainly the least creditable—is the modern *soi-disant* science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined, irrespectively of the influence of social affection"

Look also at the definition of skill, pp 153, 154

"Under the term 'skill' I mean to include the united force of experience, intellect, and passion, in their operation on manual labour, and under the term 'passion' to include the entire range of the moral feelings"

I say half way into the public's head, because you see, a few lines further on, the *Pall Mall* hopes for a pause "half way between the rigidity of Ricardo and the sentimentality of Ruskin."

With one hand on their pocket, and the other on their heart! Be it so for the present, we shall see how long this statuesque attitude can be maintained, meantime, it chances strangely—as several other things have chanced while I was writing these notes to you—that they should have put in that sneer (two lines before) at my note on



the meaning of the Homeric and Platonic sirens, at the very moment when I was doubting whether I would or would not tell you the significance of the last song of Ariel in the *Tempest*

I had half determined not, but now I shall And this was what brought me to think of it—

Yesterday afternoon I called on Mr H C Sorby, to see some of the results of an inquiry he has been following all last year, into the nature of the colouring matter of leaves and flowers

You most probably have heard (at all events, may with little trouble hear) of the marvellous power which chemical analysis has received in recent discoveries respecting the laws of light

My friend showed me the rainbow of the rose, and the rainbow of the violet, and the rainbow of the hyacinth, and the rainbow of forest leaves being born, and the rainbow of forest leaves dying

And, last, he showed me the rainbow of blood It was but the three-hundredth part of a grain, dissolved in a drop of water and it cast its measured bars, for ever recognisable now to human sight, on the chord of the seven colours And no drop of that red rain can now be shed, so small as that the stain of it cannot be known, and the voice of it heard out of the ground

But the seeing these flower colours, and the iris of blood together with them, just while I was trying to gather into brief space the right laws of war, brought vividly back to me my dreaming fancy of long ago, that even the trees of the earth were "capable of a kind of sorrow, as they opened their innocent leaves in vain for men, and along the dells of England her beeches cast their dappled shades only where the outlaw drew his bow, and the king rode his careless chase, amidst the fair defiles of the Apennines, the twisted olive-trunks hid the ambushes of treachery, and on their meadows, day by day, the lilies which were white at the dawn were washed with crimson at sunset "

And so also now this chance word of the daily journal, about the sirens, brought to my mind the divine passage in the *Cratylus* of Plato, about the place of the dead —

“And none of those who dwell there desire to depart thence,—no, not even the Sirens, but even they, the seducers, are they themselves beguiled, and they who lulled all men, themselves laid to rest—they, and all others—such sweet songs doth death know how to sing to them ”

So also the Hebrew

“And desire shall fail, because man goeth to his long home ” For you know I told you the Sirens were not pleasures, but desires, being always represented in old Greek art as having human faces, with birds’ wings and feet, and sometimes with eyes upon their wings, and there are not two more important passages in all literature, respecting the laws of labour and of life, than those two great descriptions of the Sirens in Homer and Plato,—the Sirens of death, and Sirens of eternal life, representing severally the earthly and heavenly desires of men, the heavenly desires singing to the motion of circles of the spheres, and the earthly on the rocks of fatallest shipwreck. A fact which may indeed be regarded “sentimentally,” but it is also a profoundly important politico-economical one

And now for Shakespeare’s song

You will find if you look back to the analysis of it, given in *Munera Pulveris*, that the whole play of the *Tempest* is an allegorical representation of the powers of true, and therefore spiritual, Liberty, as opposed to true, and therefore carnal and brutal Slavery. There is not a sentence nor a rhyme, sung or uttered by Ariel or Caliban, throughout the play, which has not this under-meaning

Now the fulfilment of all human liberty is in the peaceful inheritance of the earth, with its “herb yielding seed, and fruit tree yielding fruit” after his kind, the pasture, or arable land, and the blossoming, or wooded and fruited, land uniting the final elements of life and peace, for body

and soul Therefore, we have the two great Hebrew forms of benediction, "His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk," and again, "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good " And as the work of war and sin has always been the devastation of this blossoming earth, whether by spoil or idleness, so the work of peace and virtue is also that of the first day of Paradise, to "Dress it and to keep it " And that will always be the song of perfectly accomplished Liberty, in her industry, and rest, and shelter from troubled thoughts in the calm of the fields, and gaining, by migration, the long summer's day from the shortening twilight —

Where the bee sucks, there suck I,  
In a cowslip's bell I lie  
There I couch when owls do cry  
On the bat's back I do fly  
After summer merrily  
Merrily, merrily, shall I live now  
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough

And the security of this treasure to all the poor, and not the ravage of it down the valleys of the Shenandoah, is indeed the true warrior's work But, that they may be able to restrain vice rightly, soldiers must themselves be first in virtue, and that they may be able to compel labour sternly, they must themselves be first in toil, and their spears, like Jonathan's at Beth-aven, enlighteners of the eyes

## LETTER XXV

OF INEVITABLE DISTINCTION OF RANK, AND NECESSARY  
SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY—THE MEANING OF PURE-  
HEARTEDNESS—CONCLUSION

I WAS interrupted yesterday, just as I was going to set my soldiers to work, and to-day, here comes the pamphlet you promised me, containing the Debates about Church-going, in which I find so interesting a text for my concluding letter that I must still let my soldiers stand at ease for a little while. Look at its twenty-fifth page, and you will find, in the speech of Mr Thomas (carpenter), this beautiful explanation of the admitted change in the general public mind, of which Mr. Thomas, for his part, highly approves (the getting out of the unreasonable habit of paying respect to anybody) —There were many reasons to Mr Thomas's mind why the working classes did not attend places of worship, one was, that "the parson was regarded as an object of reverence. In the little town he came from, if a poor man did not make a bow to the parson he was a marked man. This was no doubt wearing away to a great extent" (the base habit of making bows), "because, the poor man was beginning to get education, and to think for himself. It was only while the priest kept the press from him that he was kept ignorant, and was compelled to bow, as it were, to the parson. It was the case all over England. The clergyman seemed to think himself something superior. Now he (Mr Thomas) did not admit there was any inferiority" (laughter, audience throughout course of meeting mainly in the right), "except, perhaps, on the score of his having received a classical education, which the poor man could not get."


Now, my dear friend, here is the element which is the veriest devil of all that have got into modern flesh, this infidelity of the nineteenth-century St Thomas in there being anything better than himself alive, coupled, as it always is, with the farther resolution—if unwillingly convinced of the fact,—to seal the Better living thing down again out of his way, under the first stone handy I had not intended, till we entered on the second section of our inquiry, namely, into the influence of gentleness (having hitherto, you see, been wholly concerned with that of justice), to give you the clue out of our dilemma about equalities produced by education, but by this speech of our superior carpenter's, I am driven into it at once, and it is perhaps as well

The speech is not, observe, without its own root of truth at the bottom of it, nor at all, as I think, ill intended by the speaker, but you have in it a clear instance of what I was saying in the sixteenth of these letters,—that education *was desired by the lower orders because they thought it would make them upper orders*, and be a leveller and effacer of distinctions. They will be mightily astonished, when they really get it, to find that it is, on the contrary, the fatallest of all discerners and enforcers of distinctions, piercing, even to the division of the joints and marrow, to find out wherein your body and soul are less, or greater, than other bodies and souls, and to sign deed of separation with unequivocal seal

Education is, indeed, of all differences not divinely appointed, an instant effacer and reconciler. Whatever is undivinely poor, it will make rich, whatever is undivinely maimed; and halt, and blind, it will make whole, and equal, and seeing. The blind and the lame are to it as to David at the siege of the Tower of the Kings, "hated of David's soul." But there are other divinely-appointed differences, eternal as the ranks of the everlasting hills, and as the strength of their ceaseless waters. And these, education does *not* do away with, but measures, manifests, and employs.

In the handful of shingle which you gather from the sea-beach, which the indiscriminate sea, with equality of fraternal foam, has only educated to be, every one, round, you will see little difference between the noble and mean stones. But the jeweller's trenchant education of them will tell you another story. Even the meanest will be better for it, but the noblest so much better that you can class the two together no more. The fair veins and colours are all clear now, and so stern is Nature's intent regarding this, that not only will the polish show which is best, but the best will take most polish. You shall not merely see they have more virtue than the others, but see that more of virtue more clearly, and the less virtue there is, the more dimly you shall see what there is of it.

And the law about education, which is sorrowfullest to vulgar pride, is this—that all its gains are at compound interest; so that, as our work proceeds, every hour throws us farther behind the greater men with whom we began on equal terms. Two children go to school hand in hand, and spell for half an hour over the same page. Through all their lives, never shall they spell from the same page more. One is presently a page ahead,—two pages, ten pages,—and evermore, though each toils equally, the interval enlarges—at birth nothing, at death, infinite.

And by this you may recognise true education from false. False education is a delightful thing, and warms you, and makes you every day think more of yourself (And true education is a deadly cold thing, with a Gorgon's head on her shield, and makes you every day think worse of yourself) 

Worse in two ways, also, more's the pity. It is perpetually increasing the personal sense of ignorance and the personal sense of fault. And this last is the truth which is at the bottom of the common evangelical notions about conversion, and which the Devil has got hold of, and hidden, until, instead of seeing and confessing personal ignorance and fault, as compared with the sense and virtue

of others, people see nothing but corruption in human nature, and shelter their own sins under accusation of their race (the worst of all assertions of equality and fraternity) And so they avoid the blessed and strengthening pain of finding out wherein they are fools, as compared with other men, by calling everybody else a fool too, and avoid the pain of discerning their own faults, by vociferously claiming their share in the great capital of original sin

I must also, therefore, tell you here what properly ought to have begun the next following section of our subject—the point usually unnoticed in the parable of the Prodigal Son

First, have you ever observed that all Christ's main teachings, by direct order, by earnest parable, and by his own permanent emotion, regard the use and misuse of *money*? We might have thought, if we had been asked what a divine teacher was most likely to teach, that he would have left inferior persons to give directions about money, and himself spoken only concerning faith and love, and the discipline of the passions, and the guilt of the crimes of soul against soul But not so He speaks in general terms of these But he does not speak parables about them for all men's memory, nor permit himself fierce indignation against them, in all men's sight The Pharisees bring Him an adulteress He writes her forgiveness on the dust of which He had formed her Another, despised of all for known sin, He recognised as a giver of unknown love But He acknowledges no love in buyers and sellers in His house One should have thought there were people in that house twenty times worse than they,—Caiaphas and his like—false priests, false prayer-makers, false leaders of the people—who needed putting to silence, or to flight, with darkest wrath But the scourge is only against the traffickers and thieves The two most intense of all the parables the two which lead the rest in love and in terror (this of the Prodigal, and of Dives) relate,

both of them, to management of riches. The practical order given to the only seeker of advice, of whom it is recorded that Christ "loved him," is briefly about his property "Sell that thou hast."

And the arbitrament of the day of Last Judgment is made to rest wholly, neither on belief in God, nor in any spiritual virtue in man, nor on freedom from stress of stormy crime, but on this only, "I was an hungered and ye gave me drink, naked, and ye clothed me, sick, and ye came unto me."

Well, then, the first thing I want you to notice in the parable of the Prodigal Son (and the last thing which people usually *do* notice in it) is—that it is about a Prodigal! He begins by asking for his share of his father's goods, he gets it, carries it off, and wastes it. It is true that he wastes it in riotous living, but you are not asked to notice in what kind of riot. He spends it with harlots—but it is not the harlotry which his elder brother accuses him of mainly, but of having devoured his father's living. Nay, it is not the sensual life which he accuses himself of—or which the manner of his punishment accuses him of. But the *wasteful* life. It is not said that he had become debauched in soul, or diseased in body, by his vice, but that at last he would fain have filled his belly with husks, and could not. It is not said that he was struck with remorse for the consequence of his evil passions, but only that he remembered there was bread enough and to spare, even for the servants, at home.

Now, my friend, do not think I want to extenuate sins of passion (though, in very truth, the sin of Magdalene is a light one compared to that of Judas), but observe, sins of passion, if of *real* passion, are often the errors and back-falls of noble souls, but prodigality is mere and pure selfishness, and essentially the sin of an ignoble or undeveloped creature, and I would rather, ten times rather, hear of a youth that (certain degrees of temptation and conditions of resistance being understood) he had fallen



into any sin you chose to name, of all the mortal ones, than that he was in the habit of running bills which he could not pay.

Farther, though I hold that the two crowning and most accursed sins of the society of this present day are the carelessness with which it regards the betrayal of women, and brutality with which it suffers the neglect of children, both these head and chief crimes, and all others, are rooted first in abuse of the laws, and neglect of the duties, concerning wealth. And thus the love of money, with the parallel (and, observe, *mathematically commensurate* looseness in management of it), the "mal tener," followed necessarily by the "mal dare," is, indeed, the root of all evil.

Then, secondly, I want you to note that when the prodigal comes to his senses, he complains of nobody but himself, and speaks of no unworthiness but his own. He says nothing against any of the women who tempted him—nothing against the citizen who left him to feed on husks—nothing of the false friends of whom "no man gave unto him"—above all, nothing of the "corruption of human nature," or the corruption of things in general. He says that *he himself* is unworthy, as distinguished from honourable persons, and that *he himself* has sinned, as distinguished from righteous persons. And *that* is the hard lesson to learn, and the beginning of faithful lessons. All right and fruitful humility, and purging of Heart, and seeing of God, is in that. It is easy to call yourself the chief of sinners, expecting every sinner round you to decline—or return—the compliment, but learn to measure the real degrees of your own relative baseness, and to be ashamed, not in heaven's sight, but in man's sight, and redemption is indeed begun. Observe the phrase, I have sinned "*against* heaven," against the great law of that, and *before* thee, visibly degraded before my human sire and guide, unworthy any more of being esteemed of his blood, and desirous only of taking the place I deserve among his servants.

Now, I do not doubt but that I shall set many a reader's teeth on edge by what he will think my carnal and material rendering of this "beautiful" parable. But I am just as ready to spiritualise it as he is, provided I am sure first that we understand it. If we want to understand the parable of the sower, we must first think of it as of literal husbandry, if we want to understand the parable of the prodigal, we must first understand it as of literal prodigality. And the story has also for us a precious lesson in this literal sense of it, namely this, which I have been urging upon you throughout these letters, that all redemption must begin in subjection, and in the recovery of the sense of Fatherhood and authority, as all ruin and desolation begin in the loss of that sense. The lost son began by claiming his rights. He is found when he resigns them. He is lost by flying from his father, when his father's authority was only paternal. He is found by returning to his father, and desiring that his authority may be absolute, as over a hired stranger.

And this is the practical lesson I want to leave with you, and all other working men.

You are on the eve of a great political crisis, and every rascal with a tongue in his head will try to make his own stock out of you. Now this is the test you must try them with. Those that say to you, "Stand up for your rights—get your division of living—be sure that you are as well off as others, and have what they have!—don't let any man dictate to you—have not you all a right to your opinion?—are you not all as good as everybody else?—let us have no governors, or fathers—let us all be free and alike." Those, I say, who speak thus to you, take Nelson's rough order for—and hate them as you do the Devil, for they *are* his ambassadors. But those, the few, who have the courage to say to you, "My friends, you and I, and all of us, have somehow got very wrong, we've been hardly treated, certainly, but here we are in a piggery, mainly by our own fault, hungry enough, and for ourselves, any-

thing but respectable, we *must* get out of this, there are certainly laws we may learn to live by, and there are wiser people than we in the world, and kindly ones, if we can find our way to them, and an infinitely wise and kind Father, above all of them and us, if we can but find our way to *Him*, and ask Him to take us for servants, and put us to any work He will, so that we may never leave Him more" The people who will say that to you, and (for by *no* saying, but by their fruits only, you shall finally know them) who are themselves orderly and kindly, and do their own business well,—take *those* for your guides, and trust them, on ice and rock alike, tie yourselves well together with them, and with much scrutiny, and cautious walking (perhaps nearly as much back as forward, at first), you will verily get off the glacier, and into meadow land, in God's time

I meant to have written much to you respecting the meaning of that word "hired servants," and to have gone on to the duties of soldiers, for you know "Soldier" means a person who is paid to fight with regular pay—literally with "soldi" or "sous"—the "penny a day" of the vineyard labourers but I can't now only just this much, that our whole system of work must be based on the nobleness of soldiership—so that we shall all be soldiers of either ploughshare or sword, and literally, all our actual and professed soldiers, whether professed for a time only, or for life, must be kept to hard work of hand, when not in actual war, their honour consisting in being set to services of more pain and danger than others, to lifeboat service, to redeeming of ground from furious rivers or sea—or mountain ruin, to subduing wild and unhealthy land, and extending the confines of colonies in the front of miasm and famine, and savage races

And much of our harder home work must be done in a kind of soldiership, by bands of trained workers sent from place to place, and town to town, doing with strong and

sudden hand what is needed for help, and setting all things in more prosperous courses for the future

Of all which I hope to speak in its proper place, after we know what offices the higher arts of gentleness have among the lower ones of force, and how their prevalence may gradually change spear to pruning-hook, over the face of all the earth

And now—but one word more—either for you, or any other readers who may be startled at what I have been saying as to the peculiar stress laid by the Founder of our religion on right dealing with wealth. Let them be assured that it is with no fortuitous choice among the attributes or powers of evil, that “Mammon” is assigned for the direct adversary of the Master whom they are bound to serve. You cannot, by any artifice of reconciliation, be God’s soldier, and his. Nor while the desire of gain is within your heart, can any true knowledge of the Kingdom of God come there. No one shall enter its stronghold,—no one receive its blessing, except, “he that hath clean hands and a pure heart,” clean hands, that have done no cruel deed,—pure heart, that knows no base desire. And, therefore, in the highest spiritual sense that can be given to words, be assured, not respecting the literal temple of stone and gold, but of the living temple of your body and soul, that no redemption, nor teaching, nor hallowing, will be anywise possible for it, until these two verses have been, for it also, fulfilled —

“And He went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought. And He taught daily in the temple.”

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### Page 16 — *Expenditure on Science and Art*

THE following is the passage referred to. The fact it relates is so curious, and so illustrative of our national interest in science, that I do not apologise for the repetition —

“Two years ago there was a collection of the fossils of Solenhofen to be sold in Bavaria, the best in existence, containing many specimens unique for perfectness, and one, unique as an example of a species (a whole kingdom of unknown living creatures being announced by that fossil). This collection, of which the mere market worth, among private buyers, would probably have been some thousand or twelve hundred pounds, was offered to the English nation for seven hundred but we would not give seven hundred, and the whole series would have been in the Munich museum at this moment, if Professor Owen<sup>16</sup> had not, with loss of his own time, and patient tormenting of the British public in the person of its representatives, for leave to give four hundred pounds at once, and himself become answerable for the other three!—which the said public will doubtless pay him eventually, but sulkily, and caring nothing about the matter all the while, only always ready to cackle if any credit comes of it. Consider, I beg of you, arithmetically, what this fact means. Your annual expenditure for public purposes (a third of it for military apparatus) is at least fifty millions. Now seven hundred pounds is to fifty million pounds roughly, as sevenpence to two thousand pounds. Suppose then, a gentleman of unknown income, but whose wealth was to be conjectured from the fact that he spent two thousand a year on his park walls and footmen only, professes himself fond of science, and that one of his servants

<sup>16</sup> I originally stated this fact without Professor Owen's permission, which, of course, he could not with propriety have granted had I asked it, but I considered it so important that the public should be aware of the fact, that I did what seemed to me right, though rude.

comes eagerly to tell him that an unique collection of fossils, giving clue to a new era of creation, is to be had for the sum of sevenpence sterling, and that the gentleman, who is fond of science, and spends two thousand a year on his park, answers after keeping his servant waiting several months, "Well! I'll give you fourpence for them, if you will be answerable for the extra threepence yourself till next year!"

## APPENDIX II

### Page 22 —*Legislation of Frederick the Great*

THE following are the portions of Mr Dixon's letters referred to —

"Well, I am now busy with *Frederick the Great*, I am not now astonished that Carlyle calls him Great, neither that this work of his should have had such a sad effect upon him in producing it, when I see the number of volumes he must have had to wade through to produce such a clear terse set of utterances, and yet I do not feel the work as a book likely to do a reader of it the good that some of his other books will do. It is truly awful to read these battles after battles, lies after lies, called Diplomacy, it's fearful to read all this, and one wonders how he that set himself to this,—He, of all men,—could have had the rare patience to produce such a laboured, heart-rending piece of work. Again, when one reads of the stupidity, the shameful waste of our monies by our forefathers, to see that our National Debt (the curse to our labour now, the millstone to our commerce, to our fair chance of competition in our day) thus created, and for what? Even Carlyle cannot tell, then how are we to tell? Now, who will deliver us? that is the question, who will help us in these days of *idle or no work*, while our foreign neighbours have plenty and are actually selling their produce to our men of capital cheaper than we can make it! House-rent getting dearer, taxes getting dearer, rates, clothing, food, etc. Sad times, my master, do seem to have fallen upon us. And the cause of nearly all this lies embedded in that Frederick, and yet, so far as I know of it, no critic has yet given an exposition of such laying there. For our behoof, is there no one that will

take this, that there lies so woven in with much other stuff so sad to read, to any man that does not believe man was made to fight alone, to be a butcher of his fellow man? Who will do this work, or piece of work, so that all who care to know how it is that our debt grew so large, and a great deal more that we ought to know?—that clearly is one great reason why the book was written and was printed. Well, I hope some day all this will be clear to our people, and some man or men will arise and sweep us clear of these hindrances, these sad drawbacks to the vitality of our work in this world.”

“57 NILE STREET, SUNDERLAND, Feb 7, 1867

“DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of two letters as additions to your books, which I have read with deep interest, and shall take care of them, and read them over again, so that I may thoroughly comprehend them, and be able to think of them for future use. I myself am not fully satisfied with our co-operation, and never have been, it is too much tinged with the very elements that they complain of in our present systems of trade—selfishness. I have for years been trying to direct the attention of the editor of the *Co-operator* to such evils that I see in it. Now further, I may state that I find you and Carlyle seem to agree quite on the idea of the *Masterhood* qualification. There again I find you both feel and write as all working men consider just. I can assure you there is not an honest, noble, working man that would not by far serve under such *master-hood* than be the employée or workman of a co-operative store. Working men do not as a rule make good masters, neither do they treat each other with that courtesy as a noble master treats his working man. George Fox shadows forth some such treatment that Friends ought to make law and guidance for their working men and slaves, such as you speak of in your letters. I will look the passage up, as it is quite to the point, so far as I now remember it. In Vol VI of *Frederick the Great*, I find a great deal there that I feel quite certain, if our Queen or Government could make law, thousands of English working men would hail it with such a shout of joy and gladness as would astonish the Continental world. These changes suggested by Carlyle and placed before the thinkers of England, are the noblest, the truest utterances on real kinghood, that I have ever read, the more I think over them, the more I feel the truth, the justness, and also the fitness of

them, to our nation's present dire necessities, yet this is the man, and these are the thoughts of his, that our critics seem never to see, or if seen, don't think worth printing or in any way wisely directing the attention of the public thereto, alas! All this and much more fills me with such sadness that I am driven almost to despair I see from the newspapers, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and other places are sternly endeavouring to carry out the short-time movement until such times as trade revives, and I find the masters and men seem to adopt it with a good grace and friendly spirit I also beg to inform you I see a Mr Morley, a large manufacturer at Nottingham, has been giving pensions to all his old workmen I hope such a noble example will be followed by other wealthy masters It would do more to make a master loved, honoured, and cared for, than thousands of pounds expended in other ways The Government Savings Bank is one of the wisest acts of late years done by our Government I, myself, often wish the Government held all our banks instead of private men, that would put an end to false speculations, such as we too often in the provinces suffer so severely by, so I hail with pleasure and delight the shadowing forth by you of these noble plans for the future I feel glad and uplifted to think of the good that such teaching will do for us all —Yours truly,

“THOMAS DIXON ”

“57 NILE STREET, SUNDERLAND, Feb 24, 1867

“DEAR SIR,—I now give you the references to *Frederick the Great*, Vol VI Land Question, 365 page, where he increases the number of small farmers to 4000 (202, 204) English soldiers and T. C's remarks on our system of purchase, etc His law (620, 623, 624) State of Poland and how he repaired it (487, 488, 489, 490) I especially value the way he introduced all kinds of industries therein, and so soon changed the chaos into order Again, the schoolmasters also are given (not yet in England, says T. C) Again the use he made of £15,000 surplus in Brandenburg, how it was applied to better his staff of masters To me, the Vol VI is one of the wisest pieces of modern thought in our language I only wish I had either your power, C. Kingsley, Maurice, or some such able pen-generalship, to illustrate and show forth all the wise teaching on law, government, and social life I see in it, and shining like a star through all its pages



I feel also the truth of all you have written, and will do all I can to make such men or women that care for such thoughts, see it, or read it I am copying the letters as fast and as well as I can, and will use my utmost endeavour to have them done that justice to they merit —Yours truly,

“THOMAS DIXON ”

### APPENDIX III

Page 23 —*Effect of Modern Entertainments on the Mind of Youth*

THE letter of the *Times* correspondent referred to contained an account of one of the most singular cases of depravity ever brought before a criminal court, but it is unnecessary to bring any of its details under the reader's attention, for nearly every other number of our journals has of late contained some instances of atrocities before unthought of, and, it might have seemed, impossible to humanity The connection of these with the modern love of excitement in the sensation novel and drama may not be generally understood, but it is direct and constant, all furious pursuit of pleasure ending in actual desire of horror and delight in death I entered into some fuller particulars on this subject in a lecture given in the spring at the Royal Institution, which will be shortly published in a form accessible to the readers of these Letters, and I therefore give no extracts from it

### APPENDIX IV

Page 46 —*Drunkenness as the Cause of Crime*

THE following portions of Mr Dixon's letter referred to, will be found interesting —

“DEAR SIR,—Your last letters I think will arouse the attention of thinkers more than any of the series, it being on topics they in general feel more interested in than the others, especially as in these you do not assail their pockets so much as in the former ones Since you seem interested with the notes or

rough sketches on gin, G—— of Dublin was the man I alluded to as making his money by drink, and then giving the results of such traffic to repair the Cathedral of Dublin. It was thousands of pounds. I call such charity robbing Peter to pay Paul! Immense fortunes are made in the *Liquor Traffic*, and I will tell you why, it is all paid for in cash, at least such as the poor people buy, they get credit for clothes, butchers' meat, groceries, etc., while they give the gin-palace keeper *cash*, they never begrudge the price of a glass of gin or beer, they never haggle over *its* price, never once think of doing that, but in the purchase of almost every other article they haggle and begrudge its price. To give you an idea of its profits—there are houses here whose average weekly takings in cash at their bars, is £50, £60, £70, £80, £90, to £150 per week! Nearly all the men of intelligence in it, say it is the curse of the *working classes*. Men whose earnings are, say 20s to 30s per week, spend on the average 3s to 6s per week (some even 10s). It's my mode of living to supply these houses with corks that makes me see so much of the drunkenness, and that is the cause why I never really cared for *my trade*, seeing the misery that was entailed on my fellow men and women by the use of this stuff. Again, a house with a licence to sell spirit, wine, and ale, to be consumed on the premises, is worth two to three times more money than any other class of property. One house here worth nominally £140 sold the other day for £520, another one worth £200 sold for £800. I know premises with a licence that were sold for £1300, and then sold again two years after for £1800, another place was rented for £50 now rents at £100—this last is a house used by working men and labourers chiefly! No, I honour men like *Sir W. Trevelyan*, that are teetotallers, or total abstinents, as an example to poor men, and to prevent his work people being tempted, will not allow any public-house on his estate. If our land had a few such men it would help the cause. We possess one such a man here, a banker. I feel sorry to say the progress of temperance is not so great as I would like to see it. The only religious body that approaches to your ideas of political economy is Quakerism as taught by George Fox. Carlyle seems deeply tinged with their teachings. *Silence* to them is as valuable as to him. Again, why should people howl and shriek over the law that the Alliance is now trying to carry out in our land called the Permissive Bill? If we had just laws we then would not be so miserable or so much

annoyed now and then with cries of Reform and cries of Distress I send you two pamphlets,—one gives the working man's reasons why he don't go to church, in it you will see a few opinions expressed very much akin to those you have written to me The other gives an account how it is the poor Indians have died of *Famine*, simply because they have destroyed the very system of Political Economy, or one having some approach to it, that you are now endeavouring to direct the attention of thinkers to in our country The *Sesame and Lilies* I have read as you requested I feel now fully the aim and object you have in view in the Letters, but I cannot help directing your attention to that portion where you mention or rather exclaim against the Florentines pulling down their *Ancient Walls* to build a *Boulevard* That passage is one that would gladden the hearts of all true *Italians*, especially men that love *Italy and Dante!*"

## APPENDIX V

Page 47—*Abuse of Food*

PARAGRAPHS cut from *Manchester Examiner* of March 16, 1867 —

"A PARISIAN CHARACTER —A celebrated character has disappeared from the Palais Royal René Lartigue was a Swiss, and a man of about sixty He actually spent the last fifteen years in the Palais Royal—that is to say, he spent the third of his life at dinner Every morning at ten o'clock he was to be seen going into a restaurant (usually Tissat's), and in a few moments was installed in a corner, which he only quitted about three o'clock in the afternoon, after having drunk at least six or seven bottles of different kinds of wine He then walked up and down the garden till the clock struck five, when he made his appearance again at the same restaurant, and always at the same place His second meal, at which he drank quite as much as at the first, invariably lasted till half-past nine Therefore, he devoted nine hours a day to eating and drinking His dress was most wretched—his shoes broken, his trousers torn, his paletôt without any lining and patched, his waistcoat without buttons, his hat a rusty red from old age, and the whole surmounted by a

dirty white beard One day he went up to the *comptoir*, and asked the presiding divinity there to allow him to run in debt for one day's dinner He perceived some hesitation in complying with the request, and immediately called one of the waiters, and desired him to follow him He went into the office, unbuttoned a certain indispensable garment, and, taking off a broad leather belt, somewhat startled the waiter by displaying two hundred gold pieces, each worth one hundred francs Taking up one of them, he tossed it to the waiter, and desired to pay him whatever he owed He never again appeared at that restaurant, and died a few days ago of indigestion "

"REVENGE IN A BALL-ROOM —A distressing event lately took place at Castellaz, a little commune of the Alpes-Maritimes, near Mentone All the young people of the place being assembled in a dancing-room, one of the young men was seen to fall suddenly to the ground, whilst a young woman, his partner, brandished a poniard, and was preparing to inflict a second blow on him, having already desperately wounded him in the stomach The author of the crime was at once arrested She declared her name to be Marie P——, twenty-one years of age, and added that she had acted from a motive of revenge, the young man having led her astray formerly with a promise of marriage, which he had never fulfilled In the morning of that day she had summoned him to keep his word, and upon his refusal, had determined on making the dancing-room the scene of her revenge She was at first locked up in the prison of Mentone, and afterwards sent on to Nice The young man continues in an alarming state "

## APPENDIX VI

### Page 50 —*Law of Property*

THE following is the paragraph referred to —

"The first necessity of all economical government is to secure the unquestioned and unquestionable working of the great law of property—that a man who works for a thing shall be allowed to get it, keep it, and consume it, in peace, and that he who does not eat his cake to-day shall be seen, without grudging, to have his cake to-morrow This, I say, is the first point to be secured

by social law, without this, no political advance, nay, no political existence, is in any sort possible. Whatever evil, luxury, iniquity, may seem to result from it, this is nevertheless the first of all equities and to the enforcement of this, by law and by police-truncheon, the nation must always primarily set its mind—that the cupboard-door may have a firm lock to it, and no man's dinner be carried off by the mob, on its way home from the baker's."

## APPENDIX VII

### Page 53 — *Ambition of Bishops*

"NEARLY all the evils in the Church have arisen from bishops desiring power more than light. They want authority, not outlook. Whereas their real office is not to rule, though it may be vigorously to exhort and rebuke, it is the king's office to rule, the bishop's office is to oversee the flock, to number it, sheep by sheep, to be ready always to give full account of it. Now it is clear he cannot give account of the souls, if he has not so much as numbered the bodies, of his flock. The first thing, therefore, that a bishop has to do is at least to put himself in a position in which, at any moment, he can obtain the history, from childhood, of every living soul in his diocese, and of its present state. Down in that back street, Bill and Nancy knocking each other's teeth out!—Does the bishop know all about it? Has he had his eye upon them? Can he circumstantially explain to us how Bill got into the habit of beating Nancy about the head? If he cannot, he is no bishop, though he had a mitre as high as Salisbury steeple, he is no bishop—he has sought to be at the helm instead of the mast-head, he has no sight of things. 'Nay,' you say, 'it is not his duty to look after Bill in the "back street".' What! the fat sheep that have full fleeces—you think it is only those he should look after, while (go back to your Milton) 'the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,' besides what the grim wolf, 'with privy paw' (bishops knowing nothing about it) 'daily devours apace, and nothing said?' 'But that's not our idea of a bishop.' Perhaps not, but it was St. Paul's, and it was Milton's. They may be right, or we may be, but we must not think we are reading either one or the other by putting our meaning into their words"—*Sesame and Lilies*, pp. 18, 19.

## APPENDIX VIII

Page 55—*Regulations of Trade*

I PRINT portions of two letters of Mr Dixon's in this place, one referring to our former discussion respecting the sale of votes

"57 NILE STREET, SUNDERLAND, March 21, 1867

"I only wish I could write in some tolerable good style, so that I could idealise, or rather realise to folks, the life, and love, and marriage of a working man and his wife It is in my opinion a working man that really does know what a true wife is, for his every want, his every comfort in life depends on her, and his children's home, their daily lives and future lives, are shaped by her Napoleon wisely said, 'France needs good mothers more than brave men Good mothers are the makers and shapers of good and brave men' I cannot say that these are the words, but it is the import of his speech on the topic We have a saying amongst us 'The man may spend and money lend, if his wife be *ought*,'—i.e. good wife,—'but he may work and try to save, but will have *nought*, if his wife be nought,'—i.e. bad or thriftless wife

"Now, since you are intending to treat of the working man's parliament and its duties, I will just throw out a few suggestions of what I consider should be the questions or measures that demand an early inquiry into and debate on That guilds be established in every town, where masters and men may meet, so as to avoid the temptations of the public-house and *drink* And then, let it be made law that every lad should serve an apprenticeship of not less than seven years to a trade or art, before he is allowed to be a member of such guild, also, that all wages be based on a rate of so much *per hour*, and not day, as at present, and let every man prove his workmanship before such a guild, and then allow to him such payment per hour as his craft merits. Let there be three grades, and then let there be trials of skill in workmanship every year, and then, if the workman of the third grade prove that he has made progress in his craft, reward him accordingly Then, before a lad is put to any trade, why not see what he is naturally fitted for? Combe's book, entitled *The Constitution of Man*, throws a good deal of truth on to these matters Now, here are two branches of the science of life that, so far,

have never once been given trial of in this way We certainly use them after a *crime* has been committed, but not till then

"Next to that, cash payment for all and everything needed in life *Credit is a curse* to him that gives it, and he that takes it He that lives by credit lives in general carelessly If there was no credit, people then would have to live on what they earned! Then, after that, the Statute of Limitations of Fortune you propose By the hour system, not a single man *need be idle*, it would give employment to all, and even two hours per day would realise more to a man than *breaking stones* Thus you would make every one self-dependent—also no fear of being out of work altogether Then let there be a Government fund for all the savings of the working man I am afraid you will think this a wild discursive sort of a letter —Yours truly,

"THOMAS DIXON "

"I have read your references to the *Times* on 'Bribery' Well, that has long been my own opinion, they simply have a vote to sell, and sell it in the same way as they sell potatoes, or a coat, or any other saleable article Voters generally say, 'What does this gentleman want in Parliament? Why, to help himself and his family or friends, he does not spend all the money he spends over his election for pure good of his country! No it's to benefit his pocket, to be sure' 'Why should I not make a penny with my vote, as well as he does with his in Parliament?' I think that if the system of canvassing or election agents were done away with, and all personal canvassing for votes entirely abolished, it would help to put down bribery Let each gentleman send to the electors his political opinions in a circular, and then let papers be sent, or cards, to each elector, and then let them go and record their votes in the same way they do for a councillor in the Corporation It would save a great deal of expense, and prevent those scenes of drunkenness so common in our towns during elections *Bewick's opinions* of these matters are quite to the purpose, I think (*see page 201 of Memoir*) Again, respecting the Paris matter referred to in your last letter, I have read it Does it not manifest plainly enough that Europeans are also in a measure possessed with that same *demoniacal spirit like the Japanese?*"

## APPENDIX IX ✓

Page 88 —*Greatness Coal-begotten*

"HERE is a bit of paper in my hand,<sup>17</sup> a good one too, and an honest one, quite representative of the best common public thought of England at this moment, and it is holding forth in one of its leaders upon our 'social welfare,'—upon our 'vivid life,'—upon the 'political supremacy of Great Britain' And what do you think all these are owing to? To what our English sires have done for us, and taught us, age after age? No not to that To our honesty of heart, or coolness of head, or steadiness of will? No not to these To our thinkers, or our statesmen, or our poets, or our captains, or our martyrs, or the patient labour of our poor? No not to these, or at least not to these in any chief measure Nay, says the journal, 'more than any agency, it is the cheapness and abundance of our coal which have made us what we are' If it be so, then 'ashes to ashes' be our epitaph' and the sooner the better I tell you, gentlemen of England, if ever you would have your country breathe the pure breath of heaven again, and receive again a soul into her body, instead of rotting into a carcase, blown up in the belly with carbonic acid (and great that way), you must think, and feel, for your England, as well as fight for her you must teach her that all the true greatness she ever had, or ever can have, she won while her fields were green and her faces ruddy,—that greatness is still possible for Englishmen, even though the ground be not hollow under their feet, nor the sky black over their heads"

—*Crown of Wild Olive*, p 103

<sup>17</sup> A saying of Baron Liebig's, quoted at the head of a leader on the same subject in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 11, 1866, summarily digests and presents the maximum folly of modern thought in this respect "Civilisation," says the Baron, "is the economy of power, and English power is coal" Not altogether so, my chemical friend Civilisation is the making of civil persons, which is a kind of distillation of which alembics are incapable, and does not at all imply the turning of a small company of gentlemen into a large company of ironmongers And English power (what little of it may be left) is by no means coal, but, indeed, of that which, "when the whole world turns to coal, then chiefly lives"



# APPENDIX X

THE following letter did not form part of the series written to Mr Dixon, but is perhaps worth reprinting I have not the date of the number of the *Gazette* in which it appeared, but it was during the tailors' strike in London

"TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Pall Mall Gazette*

"SIR,—In your yesterday's article on strikes you have very neatly and tersely expressed the primal fallacy of modern political economy—to wit, that 'the value of any piece of labour cannot be defined'—and that 'all that can be ascertained is simply whether any man can be got to do it for a certain sum' Now, sir, the 'value' of any piece of labour, that is to say, the quantity of food and air which will enable a man to perform it without losing actually any of his flesh or his nervous energy, is as absolutely fixed a quantity as the weight of powder necessary to carry a given ball a given distance And within limits varying by exceedingly minor and unimportant circumstances, it is an ascertainable quantity I told the public this five years ago—and under pardon of your politico-economical contributors—it is not a 'sentimental,' but a chemical, fact

"Let any half-dozen of recognised London physicians state in precise terms the quantity and kind of food, and space of lodging, they consider approximately necessary for the healthy life of a labourer in any given manufacture, and the number of hours he may, without shortening his life, work at such business daily if so sustained

"And let all masters be bound to give their men a choice between an order for that quantity of food and lodging, or such wages as the market may offer for that number of hours' work

"Proper laws for the maintenance of families would require further concession—but, in the outset, let but *this* law of wages be established, and if then we have any more strikes you may denounce them without one word of remonstrance either from sense or sensibility—I am, SIR, your faithful servant,

"JOHN RUSKIN"

## APPENDIX XI

## PREFACE TO "SESAME AND LILIES"—2ND EDITION, 1857

A PASSAGE in the thirty-fourth page of this book referring to Alpine travellers, will fall harshly on the reader's ear, since it has been sorrowfully enforced by the deaths on Mount Cervin I leave it, nevertheless, as it stood, for I do not now write unadvisedly, and think it wrong to cancel what has once been thoughtfully said, but it must not so remain without a few added words. No blame ought to attach to the Alpine tourist for incurring danger. There is usually sufficient cause and real reward for all difficult work, and even were it otherwise, some experience of distinct peril, and the acquirement of habits of quick and calm action in its presence, are necessary elements at some period of life in the formation of manly character. The blame of bribing guides into danger is a singular accusation, in behalf of a people who have made mercenary soldiers of themselves for centuries, without any one's thinking of giving their fidelity better employment, though, indeed, the piece of work they did at the gate of the Tuileries, however useless, was no unwise one, and their lion of flawed molasse at Lucerne, worthless in point of art though it be, is, nevertheless, a better reward than much pay, and a better ornament to the old town than the Schweizer Hof, or flat new quay, for the promenade of those travellers who do *not* take guides into danger. The British public are, however, at home, so innocent of ever buying their fellow creature's lives, that we may justly expect them to be punctilious abroad! They do not, perhaps, often calculate how many souls flit annually, choked in fire-damp and sea-sand from economically watched shafts, and economically manned ships, nor see the fiery ghosts writhe up out of every scuttleful of cheap coals, nor count how many threads of girlish life are cut off and woven annually by painted Fates, into breadths of ball-dresses, or soaked away, like rotten hemp-fibre, in the inlet of Cocytus which overflows the Grassmarket, where flesh is as grass. We need not, it seems to me, loudly blame anyone for paying a guide to take a brave walk with him. Therefore, gentlemen of the Alpine Club, as much danger as you care to face by all means, but if it please you, not so much talk of it. The real ground for reprehension of Alpine climbing is that,

with less cause, it excites more vanity than any other athletic skill. A good horseman knows what it has cost to make him one, everybody else knows it too, and knows that he is one, he need not ride at a fence merely to show his seat. But credit for practice in climbing can only be claimed after success, which, though perhaps accidental and unmerited, must yet be attained at all risks, or the shame of defeat borne with no evidence of the difficulties encountered.

At this particular period, also, the distinction obtainable by first conquest of a peak is as tempting to a traveller as the discovery of a new element to a chemist, or of a new species to a naturalist. Vanity is never so keenly excited as by competitions which involve chance, the course of science is continually arrested, and its nomenclature fatally confused, by the eagerness of even wise and able men to establish their priority in an unimportant discovery, or obtain vested right to a syllable in a deformed word, and many an otherwise sensible person will risk his life for the sake of a line in future guide-books, to the effect that "the—— horn was first ascended by Mr X in the year ——", never reflecting that of all the lines in the page, the one he has thus wrought for will be precisely the least interesting to the reader.

It is not, therefore, strange, however much to be regretted, that while no gentleman boasts in other cases of his sagacity or his courage—while no good soldier talks of the charge he led, nor any good sailor of the helm he held—every man among the Alps seems to lose his senses and modesty with the fall of the barometer, and returns from his Nephleo-coccygia brandishing his ice-axe in everybody's face. Whatever the Alpine Club have done, or may yet accomplish, in a sincere thirst for mountain knowledge, and in happy sense of youthful strength and play of animal spirit, they have done, and will do, wisely and well, but whatever they are urged to do by mere sting of competition and itch of praise, they will do, as all vain things must be done for ever, foolishly and ill. It is a strange proof of that absence of any real national love of science, of which I have had occasion to speak in the text, that no entire survey of the Alps has yet been made by properly qualified men, and that, except of the chain of Chamouni, no accurate maps exist, nor any complete geological section even of that. But Mr Reilly's survey of that central

group, and the generally accurate information collected in the guide-books published by the Club, are honourable results of English adventure, and it is to be hoped that the continuance of such work will gradually put an end to the vulgar excitement which looked upon the granite of the Alps only as an unoccupied advertisement wall for chalking names upon.

Respecting the means of accomplishing such work with least risk, there was a sentence in the article of our leading public journal which deserves, and requires expansion "Their (the Alpine Club's) ropes must not break" Certainly not! nor anyone else's ropes, if they may be rendered unbreakable by honesty of make, seeing that more lives hang by them on moving than on motionless seas The records of the last gale at the Cape may teach us that economy in the manufacture of cables is not always a matter for exultation, and, on the whole, it might even be well in an honest country, sending out, and up and down various lines, east and west, that nothing should break—banks, words, nor dredging tackle

Granting, however, such praise and such sphere of exertion as we thus justly may to the spirit of adventure, there is one consequence of it, coming directly under my own cognizance, of which I cannot but speak with utter regret—the loss, namely, of all real understanding of the character and beauty of Switzerland, by the country's being now regarded as half watering-place, half gymnasium It is indeed true that under the influence of the pride which gives poignancy to the sensations which others cannot share with us (and a not unjustifiable zest to the pleasure which we have worked for), an ordinary traveller will usually observe and enjoy more on a difficult excursion than on an easy one, and more in objects to which he is unaccustomed than in those with which he is familiar He will notice with extreme interest that snow is white on the top of a hill in June, though he would have attached little importance to the same peculiarity in a wreath at the bottom of a hill in January He will generally find more to admire in a cloud under his feet than in one over his head, and oppressed by the monotony of a sky which is prevalently blue, will derive extraordinary satisfaction from its approximation to black Add to such grounds of delight the aid given to the effect of whatever is impressive in the scenery of the high Alps, by the absence of ludicrous or degrading concomitants,

and it ceases to be surprising that Alpine excursionists should be greatly pleased, or that they should attribute their pleasure to some true and increased apprehension of the nobleness of natural scenery. But no impression can be more false. The real beauty of the Alps is to be seen, and seen only, where all may see it, the child, the cripple, and the man of grey hairs. There is more true loveliness in a single glade of pasture shadowed by pine, or gleam of rocky brook, or inlet of unsullied lake, among the lower Bernese and Savoyard hills, than in the entire field of jagged gneiss which crests the central ridge from the Shreckhorn to the Viso. The valley of Coluse, through which unhappy travellers consent now to be invoiced, packed in baskets like fish, so only that they may cheaply reach, in the feverous haste which has become the law of their being, the glen of Chamouni whose every lovely foreground rock has now been broken up to build hotels for them, contains more beauty in half a league of it, than the entire valley they have devastated, and turned into a casino, did in its uninjured pride, and that passage of the Jura by Olten (between Basle and Lucerne), which is by the modern tourist triumphantly effected through a tunnel in ten minutes, between two piggish trumpet grunts proclamatory of the ecstatic transit, used to show from every turn and sweep of its winding ascent, up which one sauntered, gathering wild-flowers, for half a happy day, diviner aspects of the distant Alps than ever were achieved by toil of limb or won by risk of life.

There is indeed a healthy enjoyment both in engineers' work and in schoolboy's play, the making and mending of roads has its true enthusiasms, and I have still pleasure enough in mere scrambling to wonder not a little at the supreme gravity with which apes exercise their superior powers in that kind, as if profitless to them. But neither macadamisation, nor tunnelling, nor rope ladders, will ever enable one human creature to understand the pleasure in natural scenery felt by Theocritus or Virgil, and I believe the athletic health of our schoolboys might be made perfectly consistent with the spirit of more courtesy and reverence, both for men and things, than is recognisable in the behaviour of modern youth. Some year or two back, I was staying at the Montanvert to paint Alpine roses, and went every day to watch the budding of a favourite bed, which was rounding into faultless bloom beneath a cirque of rock, high enough as I

hoped, and close enough, to guard it from rude eyes and plucking hands But,

"Tra erto e piano ara un sentiero ghembo,  
Che ne condusse in fianco della lacca,"

and on the day it reached the fulness of its rubied fire, I was standing near when it was discovered by a forager on the flanks of a travelling school of English and German lads He shouted to his companions, and they swooped down upon it, threw themselves into it, rolled over and over in it, shrieked, hallooed, and fought in it, trampled it down, and tore it up by the roots, breathless at last with rapture of ravage, they fixed the brightest of the remnant blossoms of it in their caps, and went on their way rejoicing

They left me to think upon, partly respecting the essential power of the beauty which could so excite them, and partly respecting the character of the youth who could only be excited to destroy But the incident was a perfect type of that irreverence for natural beauty with respect to which I said in the text, at the place already indicated, "You make railroads of the aisles of the cathedrals of the earth, and eat of their altars" For indeed all true lovers of natural beauty hold it in reverence so deep, that they would as soon think of clumbing the pillars of the choir of Beauvais for a gymnastic exercise, as of making a playground of Alpine snow, and they would not risk one hour of their joy among the hill meadows on a May morning for the fame or fortune of having stood on every pinnacle of the silver temple, and beheld the kingdoms of the world from it Love of excitement is so far from being love of beauty, that it ends always in a joy in its exact reverse, joy in destruction—as of my poor roses—or in actual details of death, until, in the literature of the day, "nothing is too dreadful, or too trivial, for the greed of the public"<sup>18</sup> And in politics apathy, irreverence, and lust of luxury, go hand in hand, until the best solemnization which can be conceived for the greatest event in modern European history, the crowning of Florence capital of Italy, is the accursed and ill-omened folly of casting down her old walls, and surrounding her with a "boulevard", and this at the very time when every stone of her ancient cities is more precious to her than the gems of a Urm breastplate, and when every nerve of her heart and brain

<sup>18</sup> *Pall Mall Gazette*, August 15th. Article on the "Forward Murders"

should have been strained to redeem her guilt and fulfil her freedom. It is not by making roads round Florence, but through Calabria, that she should begin her Roman causeway work again, and her fate points her march, not on boulevards by Arno, but waist-deep in the lagoons at Venice. Not yet, indeed, but five years of patience and discipline of her youth would accomplish her power, and sweep the martello tower from the cliffs of Vernoa, and the ramparts from the marsh of Mestre. But she will not teach her youth that discipline on boulevards.

Strange, that while we both, French and English, can give lessons in war, we only corrupt other nations when they imitate either our pleasures or our industries. We English, had we loved Switzerland indeed, should have striven to elevate, but not to disturb the simplicity of her people, by teaching them the sacredness of their fields and waters, the honour of their pastoral and burgher life, and the fellowship in glory of the grey turreted walls round their ancient cities, with the cottages in their fair groups by the forest and lake. Beautiful, indeed, upon the mountains had been the feet of any who had spoken peace to their children, who had taught those princely peasants to remember their lineage, and their league with the rocks of the field, that so they might keep their mountain waters pure, and their mountain paths peaceful, and their traditions of domestic life holy. We have taught them (incapable by circumstances and position of ever becoming a great commercial nation) all the foulness of the modern lust of wealth, without its practical intelligences, and we have developed exactly the weakness of their temperament by which they are liable to meanest ruin. Of the ancient architecture and most expressive beauty of their country there is now little vestige left, and it is one of the few reasons which console me for the advance of life, that I am old enough to remember the time when the sweet waves of the Reuss and Lummat (now foul with refuse of manufacture) were as crystalline as the heaven above them, when her pictured bridges and embattled towers ran unbroken round Lucerne, when the Rhone flowed in deep-green, softly dividing currents round the wooded ramparts of Geneva, and when from the marble roof of the western vault of Milan, I could watch the Rose of Italy flush in the first morning light, before a human foot had sullied its summit, or the reddening dawn on its rocks taken shadow of sadness from the crimson which long ago stained the ripples of Otterburn.





MUNERA PULVERIS  
ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY



# Munera Pulveris

## I

### MAINTENANCE OF LIFE WEALTH, MONEY AND RICHES

As domestic economy regulates the acts and habits of a household, political economy regulates those of a society or state, with reference to the means of its maintenance

Political economy is neither an art nor a science,<sup>1</sup> but a system of conduct and legislature, founded on the sciences, directing the arts, and impossible, except under certain conditions of moral culture

By the "maintenance" of a state is to be understood the support of its population in healthy and happy life, and the increase of their numbers, so far as that increase is consistent with their happiness. It is not the object of political economy to increase the numbers of a nation at the cost of common health or comfort, nor to increase indefinitely the comfort of individuals, by sacrifice of surrounding lives, or possibilities of life

The assumption which lies at the root of nearly all erroneous reasoning on political economy,—namely, that

<sup>1</sup> The science which in modern days has been called Political Economy is in reality nothing more than the investigation of the phenomena of commercial operations. It has no connexion with political economy, as understood and treated of by the great thinkers of past ages, and as long as it is allowed to pass under the same name, every word written by those thinkers—and chiefly the words of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, and Bacon—must be either misunderstood or misapplied. The reader must not, therefore, be surprised at the care and insistence with which I have retained the literal and earliest sense of all important terms used in these papers, for a word is usually well made at the time it is first wanted, its youngest meaning has in it the full strength of its youth, subsequent senses are commonly warped or weakened, and as a misused word always is liable to involve an obscured thought, and all careful thinkers, either on this or any other subject, are sure to have used their words accurately, the first condition, in order to be able to avail ourselves of their sayings at all, is a firm definition of terms

its object is to accumulate money or exchangeable property,—may be shown in few words to be without foundation. For no economist would admit national economy to be legitimate which proposed to itself only the building of a pyramid of gold. He would declare the gold to be wasted, were it to remain in the monumental form, and would say it ought to be employed. But to what end? Either it must be used only to gain more gold, and build a larger pyramid, or to some purpose other than the gaining of gold. And this other purpose, however at first apprehended, will be found to resolve itself finally into the service of man—that is to say, the extension, defence, or comfort of his life. The golden pyramid may perhaps be providently built, perhaps improvidently, but, at all events, the wisdom or folly of the accumulation can only be determined by our having first clearly stated the aim of all economy, namely, the extension of life.

If the accumulation of money, or of exchangeable property, were a certain means of extending existence, it would be useless, in discussing economical questions, to fix our attention upon the more distant object—life—instead of the immediate one—money. But it is not so. Money may sometimes be accumulated at the cost of life, or by limitations of it, that is to say, either by hastening the deaths of men, or preventing their births. It is therefore necessary to keep clearly in view the ultimate object of economy, and to determine the expediency of minor operations with reference to that ulterior end.

It has been just stated that the object of political economy is the continuance not only of life, but of healthy and happy life. But all true happiness is both a consequence and cause of life: it is a sign of its vigour, and means of its continuance. All true suffering is in like manner a consequence and cause of death. I shall therefore, in future, use the word “Life” singly but let it be understood to include in its signification the happiness and power of the entire human nature, body and soul.

That human nature, as its Creator made it, and maintains it wherever His laws are observed, is entirely harmonious. No physical error can be more profound, no moral error more dangerous, than that involved in the monkish doctrine of the opposition of body to soul. (No soul can be perfect in an imperfect body, no body perfect without perfect soul. Every right action and true thought sets the seal of its beauty on person and face, every wrong action and foul thought its seal of distortion, and the various aspects of humanity might be read as plainly as a printed history, were it not that the impressions are so complex that it must always in some cases—and, in the present state of our knowledge, in all cases—be impossible to decipher them completely. Nevertheless, the face of a consistently just, and of a consistently unjust person, may always be rightly discerned at a glance, and if the qualities are continued by descent through a generation or two, there arises a complete distinction of race. Both moral and physical qualities are communicated by descent, far more than they can be developed by education (though both may be destroyed for want of education), and there is as yet no ascertained limit to the nobleness of person and mind which the human creature may attain, by persevering observance of the laws of God respecting its birth and training.)

We must therefore yet farther define the aim of political economy to be "The multiplication of human life at the highest standard." It might at first seem questionable whether we should endeavour to maintain a small number of persons of the highest type of beauty and intelligence, or a larger number of an inferior class. But I shall be able to show in the sequel, that the way to maintain the largest number is first to aim at the highest standard. Determine the noblest type of man, and aim simply at maintaining the largest possible number of persons of that class, and it will be found that the largest possible number of every healthy subordinate class must necessarily be produced also.

^ The perfect type of manhood, as just stated, involves the perfections (whatever we may hereafter determine these to be) of his body, affections, and intelligence. The material things, therefore, which it is the object of political economy to produce, and use (or accumulate for use), are things which serve either to sustain and comfort the body, or exercise rightly the affections and form the intelligence.<sup>2</sup> Whatever truly serves either of these

<sup>2</sup> It may be observed, in anticipation of some of our future results, that while some conditions of the affections are aimed at by the economists as final, others are necessary to him as his own instruments as he obtains them in greater or less degree his own farther work becomes more or less possible. Such, for instance, are the fortifying virtues, which the wisest men of all time have, with more or less of distinctness, arranged under the general heads of Prudence, or Discretion (the spirit which discerns and adopts rightly), Justice (the spirit which rules and divides rightly), Fortitude (the spirit which persists and endures rightly), and Temperance (the spirit which stops and refuses rightly), or in shorter terms still, the virtues which teach how to consist, assist, persist, and desist. These outermost virtues are not only the means of protecting and prolonging life itself, but they are the chief guards or sources of the material means of life, and are the visible governing powers and princes of economy. Thus (reserving detailed statements for the sequel) precisely according to the number of just men in a nation, is their power of avoiding either intestine or foreign war. All disputes may be peaceably settled, if a sufficient number of persons have been trained to submit to the principles of justice. The necessity for war is in direct ratio to the number of unjust persons who are incapable of determining a quarrel but by violence. Whether the injustice take the form of the desire of dominion, or of refusal to submit to it, or of lust of territory, or lust of money, or of mere irregular passion and wanton will, the result is economically the same—loss of the quantity of power and life consumed in repressing the injustice, as well as of that requiring to be repressed, added to the material and moral destruction caused by the fact of war. The early civil wars of England, and the existing war in America, are curious examples—these under monarchical, this under republican institutions—of the results of the want of education of large masses of nations in principles of justice. This latter war, especially, may perhaps at last serve for some visible, or if that be impossible (for the Greeks told us that Plutus was blind, as Dante that he was speechless), some feelable proof that true political economy is an ethical, and by no means a commercial business. The Americans imagined themselves to know somewhat of money-making, bowed low before their Dollar, expecting Divine help from it, more than potent—even omnipotent. Yet all the while this apparently tangible, was indeed an imaginary Deity,—and had they shown the substance of him to any true economist, or even true mineralogist, they would have been told, long years ago,—“Alas, gentlemen, this that you are gazing is not gold—not a particle of it. It is yellow, and glittering, and like enough to the real metal,—but see—it is brittle cat-gold, ‘iron firestone.’ Out of this, heap it as high as you will, you will get so much steel and brimstone—nothing else, and in a year or two, when (had you known but a little of right economy) you might have had quiet roof-trees over your heads, and a fair account at your banker’s, you shall instead have to sleep a-field, under red tapestries, costliest, yet comfortless, and at your banker’s find deficit at compound interest.” But the mere dread or distrust resulting from the want of the inner virtues of Faith and Charity among nations, is often no less costly than war itself. The fear which France and England have of each other

purposes is "useful" to man, wholesome, healthful, helpful, or holy By seeking such things, man prolongs and increases his life upon the earth

On the other hand, whatever does not serve either of these purposes,—much more whatever counteracts them,—is in like manner useless to man, unwholesome, unhelpful, or unholy, and by seeking such things man shortens and diminishes his life upon the earth And neither with respect to things useful or useless can man's estimate of them alter their nature Certain substances being good for his food, and others noxious to him, what he thinks or wishes respecting them can neither change their nature, nor prevent their power If he eats corn, he will live, if nightshade, he will die If he produce or make good and beautiful things, they will "re-create" him, (note the solemnity and weight of the word), if bad and ugly things, they will "corrupt" or break in pieces—that is, in the exact degree of their power, kill him For every hour of labour, however enthusiastic or well intended, which he spends for that which is not bread, so much possibility of life is lost to him His fancies, likings, beliefs, however brilliant, eager, or obstinate, are of no avail if they are set on a false object Of all that he has laboured for, the eternal law of heaven and earth measures out to him for reward, to the utmost atom, that part which he ought to have laboured for, and withdraws from him (or enforces on him, it may be) inexorably that part which he ought not to have laboured for The dust and chaff are all, to the last speck, winnowed away, and on his summer threshing-floor stands his heap of corn, little or much, not according to his labour, but to his

costs each nation about fifteen millions sterling annually, besides various paralyses of commerce, that sum being spent in the manufacture of means of destruction instead of means of production There is no more reason in the nature of things that France and England should be hostile to each other than that England and Scotland should be, or Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the reciprocal terrors of the opposite sides of the English Channel are neither more necessary, more economical, nor more virtuous than the old riding and reiving on opposite flanks of the Cheviots, or than England's own weaving for herself of crowns of thorn from the stems of her Red and White Roses

discretion No "commercial arrangements," no painting of surfaces nor alloying of substances, will avail him a pennyweight Nature asks him calmly and inevitably, 'What have you found, or formed—the right thing or the wrong?' By the right thing you shall live, by the wrong you shall die

To thoughtless persons it seems otherwise The world looks to them as if they could cozen it out of some ways and means of life But they cannot cozen it they can only cozen their neighbours The world is not to be cheated of a grain, not so much as a breath of its air can be drawn surreptitiously For every piece of wise work done, so much life is granted, for every piece of foolish work, nothing, for every piece of wicked work, so much death This is as sure as the courses of day and night. But when the means of life are once produced, men, by their various struggles and industries of accumulation or exchange, may variously gather, waste, restrain, or distribute them, necessitating, in proportion to the waste or restraint, accurately so much more death The rate and range of additional death is measured by the rate and range of waste, and is inevitable,—the only question (determined mostly by fraud in peace, and force in war) is, Who is to die, and how?

Such being the everlasting law of human existence, the essential work of the political economist is to determine what are in reality useful or life-giving things, and by what degrees and kinds of labour they are attainable and distributable This investigation divides itself under three great heads,—the studies, namely, of the phenomena, first, of WEALTH, secondly, of MONEY, and thirdly, of RICHES.

These terms are often used as synonymous, but they signify entirely different things "Wealth" consists of things in themselves valuable, "Money," of documentary claims to the possession of such things, and "Riches" is a relative term, expressing the magnitude of the posses-



sions of one person or society as compared with those of other persons or societies

The study of Wealth is a province of natural science—it deals with the essential properties of things

The study of Money is a province of commercial science—it deals with the conditions of engagement and exchange

The study of Riches is a province of moral science—it deals with the due relations of men to each other in regard of material possessions, and with the just laws of their association for purposes of labour

I shall in this paper shortly sketch out the range of subjects which will come before us as we follow these three branches of inquiry

#### SECTION I—WEALTH

Wealth, it has been said, consists of things essentially valuable. We now, therefore, need a definition of “value”

Value signifies the strength or “availing” of anything towards the sustaining of life, and is always twofold, that is to say, primarily, *INTRINSIC*, and secondarily, *EFFECTUAL*

The reader must, by anticipation, be warned against confusing value with cost, or with price. Value is the life-giving power of anything, cost, the quantity of labour required to produce it, price, the quantity of labour which its possessor will take in exchange for it. Cost and price are commercial conditions, to be studied under the head of money

Intrinsic value is the absolute power of anything to support life. A sheaf of wheat of given quality and weight has in it a measurable power of sustaining the substance of the body, a cubic foot of pure air, a fixed power of sustaining its warmth, and a cluster of flowers of given beauty a fixed power of enlivening or animating the senses and heart

It does not in the least affect the intrinsic value of the

wheat, the air, or the flowers, that men refuse or despise them. Used or not, their own power is in them, and that particular power is in nothing else.

But, in order that this value of theirs may become effectual, a certain state is necessary in the recipient of it. The digesting, breathing, and perceiving functions must be perfect in the human creature before the food, air, or flowers can become of their full value to it. The production of effectual value, therefore, always involves two needs: first, the production of a thing essentially useful, then the production of the capacity to use it. Where the intrinsic value and acceptant capacity come together there is Effectual value, or wealth, where there is either no intrinsic value, or no acceptant capacity, there is no effectual value, that is to say, no wealth. A horse is no wealth to us if we cannot ride, nor a picture if we cannot see, nor can any noble thing be wealth, except to a noble person. As the aptness of the user increases, the effectual value of the thing used increases, and in its entirety can co-exist only with perfect skill of use, or harmony of nature. The effectual value of a given quantity of any commodity existing in the world at any moment is therefore a mathematical function of the capacity existing in the human race to enjoy it. Let its intrinsic value be represented by  $x$ , and the recipient faculty by  $y$ , its effectual value is  $x y$ , in which the sum varies as either coefficient varies, is increased by either's increase,<sup>3</sup> and cancelled by either's absence.

Valuable material things may be conveniently referred to five heads:

- 1 Land, with its associated air, water, and organisms
2. Houses, furniture, and instruments
- 3 Stored or prepared food and medicine, and articles of bodily luxury, including clothing

<sup>3</sup> With this somewhat strange and ungeometrical limitation, however, which, here expressed for the moment in the briefest terms, we must afterwards trace in detail,—the  $x y$  may be indefinitely increased by the increase of  $y$  only, but not by the increase of  $x$ , unless  $y$  increase also in a fixed proportion.

## 4 Books

## 5 Works of art

We shall enter into separate inquiry as to the conditions of value under each of these heads. The following sketch of the entire subject may be useful for future reference.

## 1 Land Its value is twofold

A As producing food and mechanical power

B As an object of sight and thought, producing intellectual power

A Its value, as a means of producing food and mechanical power, varies with its form (as mountain or plain), with its substance (in soil or mineral contents), and with its climate. All these conditions of intrinsic value, in order to give effectual value, must be known and complied with by the men who have to deal with it, but at any given time and place, the intrinsic value is fixed. Such and such a piece of land, with its associated lakes and seas, rightly treated in surface and substance, can produce precisely so much food and power, and no more.

Its surface treatment (agriculture) and substance treatment (practical geology and chemistry) are the first roots of economical science. By surface treatment, however, I mean more than agriculture as commonly understood, I mean land and sea culture,—dominion over both the fixed and the flowing fields,—perfect acquaintance with the laws of climate, and of vegetable and animal growth in the given tracts of earth or ocean, and of their relations to those of other districts, such relations regulating especially the production of those articles of food which, being in each particular spot producible in the highest perfection, will bring the best price in commercial exchanges.

B The second element of value in land is its beauty, united with such conditions of space and form as are necessary for exercise, or pleasant to the eye, associated with vital organism.

Land of the highest value in these respects is that lying

in temperate climates, and boldly varied in form, removed from unhealthy or dangerous influences (as of miasm or volcano), and capable of sustaining a rich fauna and flora. Such land, carefully tended by the hand of man, so far as to remove from it unsightlinesses and evidences of decay, guarded from violence, and inhabited, under man's affectionate protection, by every kind of living creature that can occupy it in peace, forms the most precious "property" that human beings can possess.

The determination of the degree in which these two elements of value can be united in land, or in which either element must, or should, in particular cases, be sacrificed to the other, forms the most important branch of economical inquiry respecting preferences of things.

## 2 Buildings, furniture, and instruments

The value of buildings consists, A In permanent strength, with convenience of form, of size, and of position, so as to render employment peaceful, social intercourse easy, temperature and air healthy. The advisable or possible magnitude of cities and mode of their distribution in squares, streets, courts, &c, the relative value of sites of land, and the modes of structure which are healthiest and most permanent, have to be studied under this head.

B The value of buildings consists secondarily in historical association and architectural beauty, of which we have to examine the influence on manners and life.

The value of instruments consists, A In their power of shortening labour, or otherwise accomplishing (as ships) what human strength unaided could not. The kinds of work which are severally best accomplished by hand or by machine,—the effect of machinery in gathering and multiplying population, and its influence on the minds and bodies of such population, together with the conceivable uses of machinery on a colossal scale in accomplishing mighty and useful works, hitherto unthought of, such as the deepening of large river channels,—

changing the surface of mountainous districts,—irrigating tracts of desert in the torrid zone,—breaking up, and thus rendering capable of quicker fusion edges of ice in the northern and southern Arctic seas, &c., so rendering parts of the earth habitable which hitherto have not been so, are to be studied under this head

B The value of instruments is, secondarily, in their aid to abstract sciences. The degree in which the multiplication of such instruments should be encouraged, so as to make them, if large, easy of access to numbers (as costly telescopes), or so cheap as that they might, in a serviceable form, become a common part of the furniture of households, is to be considered under this head

3 Food, medicine, and articles of luxury. Under this head we shall have to examine the possible methods of obtaining pure and nourishing food in such security and equality of supply as to avoid both waste and famine; then the economy of medicine and just range of sanitary law; finally the economy of luxury, partly an æsthetic and partly an ethical question.

4 Books. The value of these consists,

A In their power of preserving and communicating the knowledge of facts.

B In their power of exciting vital or noble emotion and intellectual action. They have also their corresponding negative powers of disguising and effacing the memory of facts, and killing the noble emotions, or exciting base ones. Under these two heads we have to consider the economical and educational value, positive and negative, of literature,—the means of producing and educating good authors, and the means and advisability of rendering good books generally accessible, and directing the reader's choice to them.

5 Works of art. The value of these is of the same nature as that of books, but the laws of their production and possible modes of distribution are very different, and require separate examination.

## SECTION 2 —MONEY

Under this head, we shall have to examine the laws of currency and exchange, of which I will note here the first principles

Money has been inaccurately spoken of as merely a means of circulation. It is, on the contrary, an expression of right. It is not wealth, but a documentary claim to wealth, being the sign<sup>4</sup> of the relative quantities of it, or of the labour producing it, to which, at a given time, persons or societies are entitled.

If all the money in the world, notes and gold, were destroyed in an instant, it would leave the world neither richer nor poorer than it was. But it would leave the individual inhabitants of it in different relations.

Money is, therefore, correspondent in its nature to the title-deed of an estate. Though the deed be burned, the estate still exists, but the right to it has become disputable.

The worth of money remains unchanged, as long as the proportion of the quantity of existing money to the quantity of existing wealth or available labour which it professes to represent, remains unchanged.

If the wealth increases, but not the money, the worth of the money increases, if the money increases, but not the wealth, the worth of the money diminishes.

Money, therefore, cannot be arbitrarily multiplied, any more than title-deeds can. So long as the existing wealth or available labour is not fully represented by the currency, the currency may be increased without diminution of the assigned worth of its pieces. But when the existing wealth, or available labour is once fully represented, every piece of money thrown into circulation diminishes the worth of every other existing piece, in the proportion it bears to the number of them, provided the new piece be received with equal credit, if not, the

<sup>4</sup> Always, and necessarily, an imperfect sign, but capable of approximate accuracy if rightly ordered.

depreciation of worth takes place exclusively in the new piece, according to the inferiority of its credit

When, however, new money, composed of some substance of supposed intrinsic value (as of gold), is brought into the market, or when new notes are issued which are supposed to be deserving of credit, the desire to obtain the money will, under certain circumstances, stimulate industry an additional quantity of wealth is immediately produced, and if this be in proportion to the new claims advanced, the value of the existing currency is undepreciated. If the stimulus given be so great as to produce more goods than are proportioned to the additional coinage, the worth of the existing currency will be raised.

Arbitrary control and issues of currency affect the production of wealth, by acting on the hopes and fears of men, and are, under certain circumstances, wise. But the issue of additional currency to meet the exigencies of immediate expense, is merely one of the disguised forms of borrowing or taxing. It is, however, in the present low state of economical knowledge, often possible for Governments to venture on an issue of currency, when they could not venture on an additional loan or tax, because the real operation of such issue is not understood by the people, and the pressure of it is irregularly distributed, and with an unperceived gradation.

Finally. The use of substances of intrinsic value as the materials of a currency, is a barbarism,—a remnant of the conditions of barter, which alone can render commerce possible among savage nations. It is, however, still necessary, partly as a mechanical check on arbitrary issues, partly as a means of exchanges with foreign nations. In proportion to the extension of civilization, and increase of trustworthiness in Governments, it will cease. So long as it exists, the phenomena of the cost and price of the articles used for currency, are mingled with those of currency itself, in an almost inextricable manner, and the worth of money in the market is affected by multi-

tudinous accidental circumstances, which have been traced, with more or less success by writers on commercial operations but with these variations the true political economist has no more to do than an engineer fortifying a harbour of refuge against Atlantic tide, has to concern himself with the cries or quarrels of children who dig pools with their fingers for its ebbing currents among the sand

### SECTION 3 —RICHES

According to the various industry, capacity, good fortune, and desires of men, they obtain greater or smaller share of, and claim upon, the wealth of the world

The inequalities between these shares, always in some degree just and necessary, may be either restrained by law (or circumstance) within certain limits; or may increase indefinitely

Where no moral or legal restraint is put upon the exercise of the will and intellect of the stronger, shrewder, or more covetous men, these differences become ultimately enormous But as soon as they become so distinct in their extremes as that, on one side, there shall be manifest redundance of possession, and on the other manifest pressure of need,—the terms “riches” and “poverty” are used to express the opposite states, being contrary only in the manner of the terms “warmth” and “cold,” which neither of them imply an actual degree, but only a relation to other degrees, of temperature

Respecting riches, the economist has to inquire, first, into the advisable modes of their collection, secondly, into the advisable modes of their administration

Respecting the collection of national riches, he has to inquire, first, whether he is justified in calling the nation rich, if the quantity of money it possesses relatively to that possessed by other nations be large, irrespectively of the manner of its distribution. Or does the mode of distribution in any wise affect the nature of the riches?



Thus, if the king alone be rich—suppose Croesus or Mausolus—are the Lydians and Carians therefore a rich nation? Or if one or two slave-masters be rich, and the nation be otherwise composed of slaves, is it to be called a rich nation? For if not, and the ideas of a certain mode of distribution or operation in the riches, and of a certain degree of freedom in the people, enter into our idea of riches as attributed to a people, we shall have to define the degree of fluency or circulative character which is essential to their vitality, and the degree of independence of action required in their possessors. Questions which look as if they would take time in answering. And farther. Since there are two modes in which the inequality, which is indeed the condition and constituent of riches, may be established—namely, by increase of possession on the one side, and by decrease of it on the other—we have to inquire, with respect to any given state of riches, precisely in what manner the correlative poverty was produced—that is to say, whether by being surpassed only, or being depressed also, and if by being depressed, what are the advantages, or the contrary, conceivable in the depression. For instance, it being one of the commonest advantages of being rich to entertain a number of servants, we have to inquire, on the one side, what economical process produced the riches of the master, and on the other, what economical process produced the poverty of the persons who serve him, and what advantages each (on his own side) derives from the result.

These being the main questions touching the collection of riches, the next, or last, part of the inquiry is into their administration.

They have in the main three great economical powers which require separate examination—namely, the powers of selection, direction, and provision.

A. Their power of **SELECTION** relates to things of which the supply is limited (as the supply of best things is always). When it becomes matter of question to whom

such things are to belong, the richest person has necessarily the first choice, unless some arbitrary mode of distribution be otherwise determined upon. The business of the economist is to show how this choice may be a wise one.

B Their power of DIRECTION arises out of the necessary relation of rich men to poor, which ultimately, in one way or another, involves the direction of, or authority over, the labour of the poor, and this nearly as much over their mental as their bodily labour. The business of the economist is to show how this direction may be a Just one.

C Their power of PROVISION or "preparatory sight" (for pro-accumulation is by no means necessarily provision) is dependent upon their redundancy, which may of course by active persons be made available in preparation for future work or future profit, in which function riches have generally received the name of capital, that is to say, of head-, or source-material. The business of the economist is to show how this provision may be a Distant one.

The examination of these three functions of riches will embrace every final problem of political economy,—and, above, or before all, this curious and vital problem,—whether, since the wholesome action of riches in these three functions will depend (it appears), on the Wisdom, Justice, and Far-sightedness of the holders, and it is by no means to be assumed that persons primarily rich, must therefore be just and wise,—it may not be ultimately possible so, or somewhat so, to arrange matters, as that persons primarily just and wise, should therefore be rich?

Such being the general plan of the inquiry before us, I shall not limit myself to any consecutive following of it, having hardly any good hope of being able to complete so laborious a work as it must prove to me, but from time to time, as I have leisure, shall endeavour to carry forward this part or that, as may be immediately possible, indicating always with accuracy the place which the particular essay will or should take in the completed system.

## II

NATURE OF WEALTH AND LABOUR STORE-KEEP-  
ING AND CURRENCY

THE last paper having consisted of little more than definition of terms, I purpose, in this, to expand and illustrate the given definitions, so as to avoid confusion in their use when we enter into the detail of our subject.

The view which has been taken of the nature of wealth, namely, that it consists in an intrinsic value developed by a vital power, is directly opposed to two nearly universal conceptions of wealth. In the assertion that value is primarily intrinsic, it opposes the idea that anything which is an object of desire to numbers, and is limited in quantity, may be called, or virtually become, wealth. And in the assertion that value is secondarily dependent upon power in the possessor, it opposes the idea that wealth consists of things exchangeable at rated prices. Before going farther, we will make these two positions clearer.

I First All wealth is intrinsic, and is not constituted by the judgment of men. This is easily seen in the case of things affecting the body, we know, that no force of fantasy will make stones nourishing, or poison innocent, but it is less apparent in things affecting the mind. We are easily—perhaps willingly—misled by the appearance of beneficial results obtained by industries addressed wholly to the gratification of fanciful desire, and apt to suppose that whatever is widely coveted, dearly bought, and pleasurable in possession, must be included in our definition of wealth. It is the more difficult to quit ourselves of this error because many things which are true wealth in moderate use, yet become false wealth in immoderate, and many things are mixed of good and evil,—as mostly, books, and works of art,—out of which one

person will get the good, and another the evil, so that it seems as if there were no fixed good or evil in the things themselves, but only in the view taken, and use made of them

But that is not so. The evil and good are fixed in essence and in proportion. They are separable by instinct and judgment, but not interchangeable, and in things in which evil depends upon excess, the point of excess, though indefinable, is fixed, and the power of the thing is on the hither side for good, and on the farther side for evil. And in all cases this power is inherent, not dependent on opinion or choice. Our thoughts of things neither make, nor mar their eternal force, nor <sup>which is</sup> the most serious point for future consideration—can they prevent the effect of it upon ourselves.

Therefore, the object of the special analysis of wealth into which we have presently to enter will be not so much to enumerate what is serviceable, as to distinguish what is destructive, and to show that it is inevitably destructive, that to receive pleasure from an evil thing is not to escape from, or alter the evil of it, but to be *altered* by it, that is, to suffer from it to the utmost, having our own nature, in that degree, made evil also. And it will be shown farther, that, through whatever length of time or subtleties of connexion the harm is accomplished, (being also less or more according to the fineness and worth of the humanity on which it is wrought), still, nothing *but* harm ever comes of a bad thing.

So that, finally, wealth is not the accidental object of a morbid desire, but the constant object of a legitimate one.<sup>5</sup> By the fury of ignorance, and fitfulness of caprice,

<sup>5</sup> Few passages of the book which at least some part of the nations at present most advanced in civilization accept as an expression of final truth, have been more distorted than those bearing on Idolatry. For the idolatry there denounced is neither sculpture, nor veneration of sculpture. It is simply the substitution of an "Eidolon," phantasm, or imagination of Good, for that which is real and enduring, from the Highest Living Good, which gives life, to the lowest material good which ministers to it. The Creator, and the things created, which He is said to have "seen good" in creating, are in this their eternal goodness always called Helpful or Holy, and the sweep and range of idolatry extend to the rejec-

large interests may be continually attached to things un-serviceable or hurtful, if their nature could be altered by our passions, the science of Political Economy would be but as the weighing of clouds, and the portioning out of shadows. But of ignorance there is no science, and of caprice no law. Their disturbing forces interfere with the operations of economy, but have nothing in common with them, the calm arbiter of national destiny regards only essential power for good in all it accumulates, and alike disdains the wanderings of imagination and the thirsts of disease.

II Secondly. The assertion that wealth is not *only* intrinsic, but dependent, in order to become effectual, on a given degree of vital power in its possessor, is opposed to another popular view of wealth,—namely, that though it may always be constituted by caprice, it is, when so constituted, a substantial thing, of which given quantities may be counted as existing here, or there, and exchangeable at rated prices.

In this view there are three errors. The first and chief is the overlooking the fact that all exchangeableness of commodity, or effective demand for it, depends on the sum of capacity for its use existing, here, or elsewhere. The book we cannot read, or picture we take no delight in, may indeed be called part of our wealth, in so far as we have power of exchanging either for something we like better. But our power of effecting such exchange, and yet more, of effecting it to advantage, depends absolutely on the number of accessible persons who can understand the book, or enjoy the painting, and who will

tion of any or all of these, "calling evil good, and good evil,—putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter," so betraying the first of all Loyalties, to the fixed Law of life, and with resolute opposite loyalty serving our own imagination of good, which is the law, not of the dwelling, but of the Grave, (otherwise called the law of error, or "mark missing," which we translate law of "Sin"), these "two masters," between whose services we have to choose, being otherwise distinguished as God and "Mammon," which Mammon, though we narrowly take it as the power of money only, is in truth the great evil Spirit of false and fond desire, or "Covetousness, which is Idolatry." So that Iconoclasm—image- or likeness-breaking—is easy, but an idol cannot be broken—it must be forsaken, and this is not so easy, either in resolution or persuasion. For men may readily be convinced of the weakness of an image, but not of the emptiness of a phantasm.

dispute the possession of them. Thus the actual worth of either, even to us, depends no less on their essential goodness than on the capacity existing somewhere for the perception of it, and it is vain in any completed system of production to think of obtaining one without the other. So that, though the great political economist knows that co-existence of capacity for use with temporary possession cannot be always secured, the final fact, on which he bases all action and administration, is that, in the whole nation, or group of nations, he has to deal with, for every grain of intrinsic value produced he must with exactest chemistry produce its twin grain of governing capacity, or in the degree of his failure he has no wealth. Nature's challenge to us is in earnest, as the Assyrian's mock, "I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them." Baviaca's paces are brave, if the Cid backs him, but woe to us, if we take the dust of capacity, wearing the armour of it, for capacity itself, for so all procession, however goodly in the show of it, is to the tomb.

The second error in this popular view of wealth is that, in estimating property which we cannot use as wealth, because it is exchangeable, we in reality confuse wealth with money. The land we have no skill to cultivate, the book which is sealed to us, or dress which is superfluous, may indeed be exchangeable, but as such are nothing more than a cumbrous form of bank-note, of doubtful and slow convertibility. As long as we retain possession of them, we merely keep our bank-notes in the shape of gravel or clay, of book leaves, or of embroidered tissue. Circumstances may perhaps render such forms the safest, or a certain complacency may attach to the exhibition of them,—into both these advantages we shall inquire afterwards, I wish the reader only to observe here, that exchangeable property which we cannot use is, to us personally, merely one of the forms of money, not of wealth.

The third error in the popular view is the confusion of guardianship with possession, the real state of men of

property being, too commonly, that of curators, not possessors of wealth. For a man's power over his property is at the widest range of it, fivefold, it is power of Use, Administration, Ostentation, Destruction, or Bequest and possession is in use only, which for each man is sternly limited, so that such things, and so much of them, are well for him, or Wealth, and more of them, or any other things, are ill for him, or Illth. Plunged to the lips in Orinoco, he shall drink to his thirst measure,—more, at his peril, with a thousand oxen on his lands, he shall eat to his hunger measure,—more, at his peril. He cannot live in two houses at once, a few bales of silk or wool will suffice for the fabric of all the clothes he can ever wear, and a few books will probably hold all the furniture good for his brain.<sup>6</sup> Beyond these, in the best of us but

<sup>6</sup> I reserve until the completion and collection of these papers, any support by the authority of other writers of the statements made in them, were, indeed, such authorities wisely sought for and shown, there would be no occasion for my writing at all. Even in the scattered passages referring to this subject in three books of Carlyle's—*Sartor Resartus*, *Past and Present*, and the *Letter Day Pamphlets*—all has been said that needs to be said and far better than I shall ever say it again. But the habit of the public mind at present is to require everything to be uttered diffusely, loudly, and seven times over, before it will listen, and it has exclaimed against these papers of mine as if they contained things daring and new, when there is not one assertion in them of which the truth has not been for ages known to the wisest, and proclaimed by the most eloquent of men. It will be a far greater pleasure to me hereafter, to collect their words than to add to mine, Horace's clear rendering of the substance of the preceding passages in the text may be found room for at once,

Si quis emat citharis, emptas comportet in unum  
Nec studio citharæ, nec Musæ deditus ulli,  
Si scalpra et formas non sutor, nautica vela  
Aversus mercaturis, delirus et amens  
Undique dicatur merito. Qui discrepat stis  
Qui nummos aurumque recondit, nescius uti  
Compositis, metuensque velut contingere sacrum?

With which it is perhaps desirable also to give Xenophon's statement, it being clearer than any English one can be, owing to the power of the general Greek term for wealth, "useable things."

Ταῦτ' ἄρα ὄντα, τῷ μὲν ἐπισταμένῳ χρῆσθαι αὐτῶν ἐκάστοις χρήματ' ἔστι, τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐπισταμένῳ οὐ χρήματα ὥσπερ γε αὐτοὶ τῷ μὲν ἐπισταμένῳ ἄλλως λόγῳ αὐλεῖν χρήματ' εἰσι, τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐπισταμένῳ οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἢ χρῆσθαι λίθοι, εἰ μὴ ἀποδιδοῦν γε αὐτοῦς \* \* \* Μὴ πωλοῦμενοι μὲν γὰρ οὐ χρήματ' εἰσιν οἱ αὐτοὶ (οὐδὲν γὰρ χρήσιμοι εἰσι) πωλουμένοι δὲ χρήματα. Πρὸς ταῦτα δ' ὁ Σωκράτης εἶπεν, ἣν ἐπίστανται γε πωλεῖν. Εἰ δὲ πωλοῖται αὐτὸς πρὸς τοῦτον ὅς μὴ ἐπίστανται χρῆσθαι, οὐδὲ πωλοῦμενοι εἰσι χρήματα.

narrow, capacities, we have but the power of administering, or if for harm, *mal*-administering, wealth (that is to say, distributing, lending, or increasing it),—of exhibiting it (as in magnificence of retinue or furniture),—of destroying, or, finally, of bequeathing it. And with multitudes of rich men, administration degenerates into curatorship, they merely hold their property in charge, as Trustees, for the benefit of some person or persons to whom it is to be delivered upon their death, and the position, explained in clear terms, would hardly seem a covetable one. What would be the probable decision of a youth on his entrance into life, to whom the career hoped for him was proposed in terms such as these “You must work unremittingly, and with your utmost intelligence, during all your available years, you will thus accumulate wealth to a large amount, but you must touch none of it, beyond what is needful for your support. Whatever sums you gain beyond those required for your decent and moderate maintenance shall be properly taken care of, and on your death-bed you shall have the power of determining to whom they shall belong, or to what purposes be applied.”

The labour of life, under such conditions, would probably be neither zealous nor cheerful, yet the only difference between this position and that of the ordinary capitalist is the power which the latter delights in supposing himself to possess, and which is attributed to him by others, of spending his money at any moment. This pleasure, taken in the imagination of power to part with that with which we have no intention of parting, is one of the most curious though commonest forms of the *Eidolon*, or *Phantasm* of Wealth. But the political economist has nothing to do with this idealism, and looks only to the practical issue of it,—namely, that the holder of wealth, in such temper, may be regarded simply as a mechanical means of collection, or as a money-chest with



a slit in it,<sup>7</sup> set in the public thoroughfare,—chest of which only Death has the key, and probably Chance the distribution of contents. In his function of lender (which, however, is one of administration, not use, as far as he is himself concerned), the capitalist takes, indeed, a more interesting aspect, but even in that function, his relations with the state are apt to degenerate into a mechanism for the convenient contraction of debt,—a function the more mischievous, because a nation invariably appeases its conscience with respect to an unjustifiable expense by meeting it with borrowed funds,—expresses its repentance of a foolish piece of business by letting its tradesmen wait for their money,—and always leaves its descendants to pay for the work which will be of the least service to them.<sup>8</sup>

Quit of these three sources of misconception, the reader will have little farther difficulty in apprehending the real nature of Effectual value. He may, however, at first not without surprise, perceive the consequences involved in the acceptance of our definition. For if the actual existence of wealth be dependent on the power of its possessor, it follows that the sum of wealth held by the nation, instead of being constant or calculable, varies hourly, nay, momentarily, with the number and character of its holders, and that in changing hands, it changes in quantity. And farther, since the worth of the currency is proportioned to the sum of material wealth which it represents, if the sum of the wealth changes, the worth of the currency changes. And thus both the sum of the property, and power of the currency, of the state, vary momentarily as the character and number of the holders.

<sup>7</sup> The orifice being not merely of a receptant, but of a suctional character. Among the types of human virtue and vice presented grotesquely by the lower animals, perhaps none is more curiously definite than that of avarice in the Cephalopod, a creature which has a purse for a body, a hawk's beak for a mouth, suckers for feet and hands, and whose house is its own skeleton.

<sup>8</sup> It would be well if a somewhat dogged conviction could be enforced on nations as on individuals, that, with few exceptions, what they cannot at present pay for, they should not at present have.

And not only so, but a different rate and manner of variation is caused by the character of the holders of different kinds of wealth. The transitions of value caused by the character of the holders of land differ in mode from those caused by character in holders of works of art, and these again from those caused by character in holders of machinery or other working capital. But we cannot examine these special phenomena of any kind of wealth until we have a clear idea of the way in which true currency expresses them, and of the resulting modes in which the cost and price of any article are related to its value. To obtain this we must approach the subject in its first elements.

Let us suppose a national store of wealth, real or imaginary (that is to say, composed of material things either useful, or believed to be so), presided over by a Government,<sup>9</sup> and that every workman, having produced

\* The reader is to include here in the idea of "Government," any branch of the Executive, or even any body of private persons, entrusted with the practical management of public interests unconnected directly with their own personal ones. In theoretical discussions of legislative interference with political economy, it is usually, and of course unnecessarily, assumed that Government must be always of that form and force in which we have been accustomed to see it,—that its abuses can never be less, nor its wisdom greater, nor its powers more numerous. But, practically, the custom in most civilized countries is, for every man to deprecate the interference of Government as long as things tell for his personal advantage, and to call for it when they cease to do so. The request of the Manchester Economists to be supplied with cotton by the Government (the system of supply and demand having, for the time, fallen sorrowfully short of the expectations of scientific persons from it), is an interesting case in point. It were to be wished that less wide and bitter suffering (suffering, too, of the innocent) had been needed to force the nation, or some part of it, to ask itself why a body of men, already confessedly capable of managing matters both military and divine, should not be permitted, or even requested at need to provide in some wise for sustenance as well as for defence, and secure, if it might be (and it might, I think, even the *rather* be), purity of bodily aliment, as well as of religious conviction? Why, having made many roads for the passage of armies, they may not make a few for the conveyance of food, and after organizing, with applause, various schemes of spiritual instruction for the Public, organize, moreover, some methods of bodily nourishment for them? Or is the soul so much less trustworthy in its instincts than the stomach, that legislation is necessary for the one, but inconvenient to the other?

There is a strange fallacy running at this time through all talk about free-trade. It is continually assumed that every kind of Government interference takes away liberty of trade. Whereas liberty is lost only when interference hinders, not when it helps. You do not take away a man's freedom by showing him his road—not by making it smoother for him (not that it is always desirable to do so, but it may be), nor even by fencing it for him, if there is an open ditch at the side of it. The real mode in which protection interferes with liberty, and

any article involving labour in its production, and for which he has no immediate use, brings it to add to this store, receiving from the Government, in exchange, an order either for the return of the thing itself, or of its equivalent in other things,<sup>10</sup> such as he may choose out of the store at any time when he needs them. Now, supposing that the labourer speedily uses this general order, or, in common language, "spends the money," he has neither changed the circumstances of the nation nor his own, except in so far as he may have produced useful and consumed useless articles, or *vice versa*. But if he does not use, or uses in part only, the order he receives, and lays aside some portion of it, and thus every day bringing his contribution to the national store, lays by some per-centage of the order received in exchange for it, he increases the national wealth daily by as much as he does not use of the received order, and to the same amount accumulates a monetary claim on the Government. It is of course always in his power, as it is his legal right, to bring forward this accumulation of claim, and at once to consume, destroy, or distribute, the sum of his wealth. Supposing he never does so, but dies, leaving his claim to others, he has enriched the state during his life by the quantity of wealth over which that claim extends, or has, in other words, rendered so much additional life possible in the state, of which additional life he bequeaths the immediate possibility to those whom he invests with his

the real evil of it, is not in its "protecting" one person, but in its hindering another, a form of interference which invariably does most mischief to the person it is intended to serve, which the Northern Americans are about uncomfortably to discover, unless they think better of it.

There is also a ludicrous confusion in many persons' minds between protection and encouragement, they differ materially. "Protection" is saying to the commercial schoolboy, "Nobody shall hit you." "Encouragement," is saying to him, "That's the way to hit."

<sup>10</sup> The question of equivalence (namely, how much wine a man is to receive in return for so much corn, or how much coal in return for so much iron) is a quite separate one which we will examine presently. For the time, let it be assumed that this equivalence has been determined, and that the Government order in exchange for a fixed weight of any article (called, suppose, *a*), is either for the return of that weight of the article itself, or of another fixed weight of the article *b*, or another of the article *c*, and so on.

claim Supposing him to cancel the claim, he would distribute this possibility of life among the nation at large

We hitherto consider the Government itself as simply a conservative power, taking charge of the wealth entrusted to it

But a Government may be far other than a conservative power It may be on the one hand constructive, on the other destructive

If a constructive, or improving power, using all the wealth entrusted to it to the best advantage, the nation is enriched in root and branch at once, and the Government is enabled for every order presented, to return a quantity of wealth greater than the order was written for, according to the fructification obtained in the interim <sup>11</sup> This ability may be either concealed, in which case the currency does not completely represent the wealth of the country, or it may be manifested by the continual payment of the excess of value on each order, in which case there is (irrespectively, observe, of collateral results afterwards to be examined) a perpetual rise in the worth of the currency, that is to say, a fall in the price of all articles represented by it

But if the Government be destructive, or a consuming power, it becomes unable to return the value received on the presentation of the order

This inability may either (A) be concealed by meeting demands to the full, until it issue in bankruptcy, or in some form of national debt,—or (B) it may be concealed during oscillatory movements between destructiveness and productiveness, which result on the whole in stability,—or (C) it may be manifested by the consistent return of less than value received on each presented order, in which case there is a consistent fall in the worth of the currency, or rise in the price of the things represented by it.

Now, if for this conception of a central Government,

<sup>11</sup> The reader must be warned in advance that the conditions here supposed have nothing to do with the "interest" of money commonly so called

we substitute that of another body of persons occupied in industrial pursuits, of whom each adds in his private capacity to the common store so that the store itself, instead of remaining a public property of ascertainable quantity, for the guardianship of which a body of public men are responsible, becomes disseminated private property, each man giving in exchange for any article received from another, a general order for its equivalent in whatever other article the claimant may desire (such general order being payable by any member of the society in whose possession the demanded article may be found), we at once obtain an approximation to the actual condition of a civilized mercantile community, from which approximation we might easily proceed into still completer analysis I purpose, however, to arrive at every result by the gradual expansion of the simpler conception, but I wish the reader to observe, in the meantime, that both the social conditions thus supposed (and I will by anticipation say also, all possible social conditions,) agree in two great points, namely, in the primal importance of the supposed national store or stock, and in its destructibility or improveability by the holders of it

I Observe that in both conditions, that of central Government-holding, and diffused private-holding, the quantity of stock is of the same national moment In the one case, indeed, its amount may be known by examination of the persons to whom it is confided, in the other it cannot be known but by exposing the private affairs of every individual But, known or unknown, its significance is the same under each condition The riches of the nation consist in the abundance, and their wealth depends on the nature of this store

II In the second place, both conditions (and all other possible ones) agree in the destructibility or improveability of the store by its holders Whether in private hands, or under Government charge, the national store may be daily consumed, or daily enlarged, by its possessors, and

while the currency remains apparently unaltered, the property it represents may diminish or increase

The first question, then, which we have to put under our simple conception of central Government, namely, "What store has it?" is one of equal importance, whatever may be the constitution of the state, while the second question—namely, "Who are the holders of the store?" involves the discussion of the constitution of the state itself

The first inquiry resolves itself into three heads—

- 1 What is the nature of the store?
- 2 What is its quantity in relation to the population?
- 3 What is its quantity in relation to the currency?

The second inquiry, into two—

1 Who are the Holders of the store, and in what proportions?

2 Who are the Claimants of the store, (that is to say the holders of the currency,) and in what proportions?

We will examine the range of the first three questions in the present paper, of the two following, in the sequel

I QUESTION FIRST What is the nature of the store? Has the nation hitherto worked for and gathered the right thing or the wrong? On that issue rest the possibilities of its life

For example, let us imagine a society, of no great extent, occupied in procuring and laying up store of corn, wine, wool, silk, and other such preserveable materials of food and clothing, and that it has a currency representing them. Imagine farther, that on days of festivity, the society discovering itself to derive satisfaction from pyrotechnics, gradually turns its attention more and more to the manufacture of gunpowder, so that an increasing number of labourers, giving what time they can spare to this branch of industry, bring increasing quantities of combustibles into the store, and use the general orders received in exchange to obtain such wine, wool, or corn as they may have need of. The currency

remains the same, and represents precisely the same amount of material in the store, and of labour spent in producing it. But the corn and wine gradually vanish, and in their place, as gradually, appear sulphur and saltpetre, till at last, the labourers who have consumed corn and supplied nitre, presenting on a festal morning some of their currency to obtain materials for the feast, discover that no amount of currency will command anything festive, except Fire. The supply of rockets is unlimited, but that of food, limited in a quite final manner, and the whole currency in the hands of the society represents an infinite power of detonation, but none of existence.

This statement, caricatured as it may seem, is only exaggerated in assuming the persistence of the folly to extremity, unchecked, as in reality it would be, by the gradual rise in price of food. But it falls short of the actual facts of human life in expression of the depth and intensity of the folly itself. For a great part (the reader would not believe how great until he saw the statistics in detail) of the most earnest and ingenious industry of the world is spent in producing munitions of war, gathering, that is to say the materials, not of festive, but of consuming fire, filling its stores with all power of the instruments of pain, and all affluence of the ministries of death. It was no true *Trionfo della Morte* which men have seen and feared (sometimes scarcely feared) so long,—wherein he brought them rest from their labours. We see and share another and higher form of his triumph now. Taskmaster, instead of Releaser, he rules the dust of the arena no less than of the tomb, and, content once in the grave whither man went, to make his works to cease and his devices to vanish,—now, in the busy city and on the serviceable sea, makes his work to increase, and his devices to multiply.

To this doubled loss, or negative power of labour, spent in producing means of destruction, we have to

add in our estimate of the consequences of human folly, whatever more insidious waste of toil there is in production of unnecessary luxury. Such and such an occupation (it is said) supports so many labourers, because so many obtain wages in following it, but it is never considered that unless there be a supporting power in the product of the occupation, the wages given to one man are merely withdrawn from another. We cannot say of any trade that it maintains such and such a number of persons, unless we know how and where the money, now spent in the purchase of its produce, would have been spent, if that produce had not been manufactured. The purchasing funds truly support a number of people in making This, but (probably) leave unsupported an equal number who are making, or could have made That. The manufacturers of small watches thrive at Geneva,—it is well,—but where would the money spent on small watches have gone, had there been no small watches to buy?

If the so frequently uttered aphorism of mercantile economy—"labour is limited by capital," were true, this question would be a definite one. But it is untrue, and that widely. Out of a given quantity of funds for wages, more or less labour is to be had, according to the quantity of will with which we can inspire the workman, and the true limit of labour is only in the limit of this moral stimulus of the will, and of the bodily power. In an ultimate, but entirely unpractical sense, labour is limited by capital, as it is by matter—that is to say, where there is no material, there can be no work,—but in the practical sense, labour is limited only by the great original capital<sup>12</sup> of Head, heart, and hand. Even in the most artificial relations of commerce, it is to capital as fire to fuel: out of so much fuel, you *can* have only so much fire; but out of so much fuel you *shall* have so much fire,—not in propor-

<sup>12</sup> The aphorism, being hurried English for "labour is limited by want of capital," involves also awkward English in its denial, which cannot be helped



tion to the mass of combustibles, but to the force of wind that fans and water that quenches, and the appliance of both. And labour is furthered, as conflagration is, not so much by added fuel, as by admitted air.

For which reasons, I had to insert, above, the qualifying "probably," for it can never be said positively that the purchase-money, or wages fund of any trade is withdrawn from some other trade. The object itself may be the stimulus of the production of the money which buys it, that is to say, the work by which the purchaser obtained the means of buying it, would not have been done by him, unless he had wanted that particular thing. And the production of any article not intrinsically (nor in the process of manufacture) injurious, is useful, if the desire of it causes productive labour in other directions.

In the national store, therefore, the presence of things intrinsically valueless does not imply an entirely correlative absence of things valuable. We cannot be certain that all the labour spent on vanity has been diverted from reality, and that for every bad thing produced, a precious thing has been lost. In great measure, the vain things represent the results of roused indolence, they have been carved, as toys, in extra time, and, if they had not been made, nothing else would have been made. Even to munitions of war this principle applies, they partly represent the work of men who, if they had not made spears, would never have made pruning hooks, and who are incapable of any activities but those of contest.

Thus then, finally, the nature of the store has to be considered under two main lights, the one, that of its immediate and actual utility, the other, that of the past national character which it signifies by its production, and future character which it must develop by its use. And the issue of this investigation will be to show us that Economy does not depend merely on principles of "demand and supply," but primarily on what is demanded, and what is supplied.

II QUESTION SECOND—What is the quantity of the store in relation to the population?

It follows from what has been already stated that the accurate form in which this question has to be put is—“What quantity of each article composing the store exists in proportion to the real need for it by the population?” But we shall for the time assume, in order to keep all our terms at the simplest, that the store is wholly composed of useful articles, and accurately proportioned to the several needs for them.

Now it does not follow, because the store is large in proportion to the number of the people, that the people must be in comfort, nor because it is small, that they must be in distress. An active and economical race always produces more than it requires, and lives (if it is permitted to do so) in competence on the produce of its daily labour. The quantity of its store, great or small, is therefore in many respects indifferent to it, and cannot be inferred from its aspect. Similarly an inactive and wasteful population, which cannot live by its daily labour, but is dependent, partly or wholly, on consumption of its store, may be (by various difficulties, hereafter to be examined, in realizing or getting at such store) retained in a state of abject distress, though its possessions may be immense. But the results always involved in the magnitude of store are, the commercial power of the nation, its security, and its mental character. Its commercial power, in that according to the quantity of its store may be the extent of its dealings, its security, in that according to the quantity of its store are its means of sudden exertion or sustained endurance, and its character, in that certain conditions of civilization cannot be attained without permanent and continually accumulating store, of great intrinsic value, and of peculiar nature.

Now, seeing that these three advantages arise from largeness of store in proportion to population, the question

arises immediately, "Given the store—is the nation enriched by diminution of its numbers? Are a successful national speculation, and a pestilence, economically the same thing?"

This is in part a sophistical question, such as it would be to ask whether a man was richer when struck by disease which must limit his life within a predicable period, than he was when in health. He is enabled to enlarge his current expenses, and has for all purposes a larger sum at his immediate disposal (for, given the fortune, the shorter the life, the larger the annuity), yet no man considers himself richer because he is condemned by his physician.

The logical reply is that, since Wealth is by definition only the means of life, a nation cannot be enriched by its own mortality. Or in shorter words, the life is more than the meat, and existence itself, more wealth than the means of existence. Whence, of two nations who have equal store, the more numerous is to be considered the richer, provided the type of the inhabitant be as high (for, though the relative bulk of their store be less, its relative efficiency, or the amount of effectual wealth, must be greater). But if the type of the population be deteriorated by increase of its numbers, we have evidence of poverty in its worst influence, and then, to determine whether the nation in its total may still be justifiably esteemed rich, we must set or weigh, the number of the poor against that of the rich.

To effect which piece of scale-work, it is of course necessary to determine, first, who are poor and who are rich, nor this only, but also how poor and how rich they are! Which will prove a curious thermometrical investigation, for we shall have to do for gold and for silver what we have done for quicksilver—determine, namely, their freezing point, their zero, their temperate and fever-heat points, finally, their vaporescent point, at which riches, sometimes explosively, as lately in America,

"make to themselves wings"—and correspondently, the number of degrees *below* zero at which poverty, ceasing to brace with any wholesome cold, burns to the bone

For the performance of these operations, in the strictest sense scientific, we will first look to the existing so called "science" of Political Economy, we will ask it to define for us the comparatively and superlatively rich, and the comparatively and superlatively poor, and on its own terms—if any terms it can pronounce—examine, in our prosperous England, how many rich and how many poor people there are, and whether the quantity and intensity of the poverty is indeed so overbalanced by the quantity and intensity of wealth, that we may permit ourselves a luxurious blindness to it, and call ourselves, complacently, a rich country. And if we find no clear definition in the existing science, we will endeavour for ourselves to fix the true degrees of the Plutonic scale, and to apply them

III QUESTION THIRD—What is the quantity of the store in relation to the Currency?

We have seen that the real worth of the currency, so far as dependent on its relation to the magnitude of the store, may vary within certain limits, without affecting its worth in exchange. The diminution or increase of the represented wealth may be unperceived, and the currency may be taken either for more or less than it is truly worth. Usually it is taken for more, and its power in exchange, or credit-power, is thus increased (or retained) up to a given strain upon its relation to existing wealth. This credit-power is of chief importance in the thoughts, because most sharply present to the experience, of a mercantile community but the conditions of its stability<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> These are nearly all briefly represented by the image used for the force of money by Dante, of mast and sail,—

"Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele  
Caggiono avvolte, poi ch'è l'alber fiacca  
Tal cadde a terra la fiera crudele"

The image may be followed out, like all of Dante's, into as close detail as the reader chooses. Thus the stress of the sail must be proportioned to the strength of the mast, and it is only in unforeseen danger that a skilful seaman ever car-

and all other relations of the currency to the material store are entirely simple in principle, if not in action. Far other than simple are the relations of the currency to that "available labour" which by our definition (p 208) it also represents. For this relation is involved not only with that of the magnitude of the store to the number, but with that of the magnitude of the store to the mind, of the population. Its proportion to their number, and the resulting worth of currency, are calculable, but its proportion to their will for labour is not. The worth of the piece of money which claims a given quantity of the store, is, in exchange, less or greater according to the facility of obtaining the same quantity of the same thing without having recourse to the store. In other words, it depends on the immediate Cost and Price of the thing. We must now, therefore, complete the definition of these terms.

All cost and price are counted in Labour. We must know first, therefore, what is to be counted *as* Labour.

I have already defined labour to be the Contest of the life of man with an opposite<sup>14</sup>. Literally, it is the quantity of "Lapse," loss, or failure of human life caused by any effort. It is usually confused with effort itself, or the application of power (opera), but there is much effort which is merely a mode of recreation, or of pleasure. The most beautiful actions of the human body, and the highest results of the human intelligence, are conditions, or achievements, of quite unlaborious, nay, of recreative, effort. But labour is the suffering in effort. It is the negative quantity, or quantity of de-feat which has to be counted against every Feat, and of de-fect which has to be counted against every Fact, or Deed of men. In brief, it is "that quantity of our toil which we die in."

ness all the canvas his spars will bear, states of mercantile languor are like the flap of the sail in a calm,—of mercantile precaution, like taking in reefs, and mercantile run is instant on the breaking of the mast.

<sup>14</sup> That is to say, its only price is its return. Compare "Unto this Last," p 176, and what follows.

We might, therefore, *à priori*, conjecture (as we shall ultimately find), that it cannot be bought, nor sold. Every thing else is bought and sold for Labour, but labour itself cannot be bought nor sold for anything, being priceless<sup>15</sup>. The idea that it is a commodity to be bought or sold, is the alpha and omega of Politico-Economic fallacy.

This being the nature of labour, the "Cost" of anything is the quantity of labour necessary to obtain it,—the quantity for which, or at which, it "stands" (constat). It is literally the "Constancy" of the thing,—you shall win it—move it—come at it—for no less than this.

Cost is measured and measurable only in "labor," not in "opera."<sup>16</sup> It does not matter how much *power* a thing needs to produce it, it matters only how much *distress*. Generally the more the power it requires, the less the distress, so that the noblest works of man cost less than the meanest.

True labour, or spending of life, is either of the body, in fatigue or pain, of the temper or heart (as in perseverance of search for things,—patience in waiting for them,—fortitude or degradation in suffering for them, and the like), or of the intellect. All these kinds of labour are supposed to be included in the general term, and the quantity of labour is then expressed by the time it lasts.

<sup>15</sup> The object of Political Economy is not to buy, nor to sell labour,—but to spare it. Every attempt to buy or sell it is, in the outcome, ineffectual,—so far as successful, it is not sale, but Betrayal, and the purchase-money is a part of that typical thirty pieces which bought, first the greatest of labours, and afterwards the burial field of the Stranger, for this purchase-money, being in its very smallness or vileness the exactly measured opposite of the "*vilius annona amicorum*," makes *all* men strangers to each other.

<sup>16</sup> Cicero's distinction, "*sordidi quæstus, quorum operæ, non quorum artes emuntur*," admirable in principle, is inaccurate in expression, because Cicero did not practically know how much operative dexterity is necessary in all the higher arts, but the cost of this dexterity is incalculable. Be it great or small, the "cost" of the mere authority and perfectness of touch in a hammer stroke of Donatello's, or a pencil-touch of Correggio's, is inestimable by any ordinary arithmetic. (The best masters themselves usually estimate it at sums varying from two to three or four shillings a day, with wine or soup extra.)

So that a unit of labour is "an hour's work" or a day's work, as we may determine<sup>17</sup>

Cost, like value, is both intrinsic and effectual. Intrinsic cost is that of getting the thing in the right way, effectual cost is that of getting the thing in the way we set about it. But intrinsic cost cannot be made a subject of analytical investigation, being only partially discoverable, and that by long experience. Effectual cost is all that the political Economist can deal with, that is to say, the cost of the thing under existing circumstances, and by known processes.

Cost (irrespective of any questions of demand or supply) varies with the quantity of the thing wanted, and with the number of persons who work for it. It is easy to get a little of some things, but difficult to get much, it is impossible to get some things with few hands, but easy to get them with many.

The cost and value of things, however difficult to determine accurately, are thus both dependent on ascertainable physical circumstances<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Only observe, as some labour is more destructive of life than other labour, the hour or day of the more destructive toil is supposed to include proportionate rest. Though men do not, or cannot, usually take such rest, except in death.

<sup>18</sup> There is, therefore, observe, no such thing as cheapness (in the common use of that term), without some error or injustice. A thing is said to be cheap, not because it is common, but because it is supposed to be sold under its worth. Everything has its proper and true worth at any given time, in relation to everything else, and at that worth should be bought and sold. If sold under it, it is cheap to the buyer by exactly so much as the seller loses, and no more. Putrid meat, at twopence a pound, is not "cheaper" than wholesome meat at sevenpence a pound, it is probably much dearer, but if, by watching your opportunity, you can get the wholesome meat for sixpence a pound, it is cheaper to you by a penny, which you have gained, and the seller has lost. The present rage for cheapness is either, therefore, simply and literally, a rage for badness of all commodities, or it is an attempt to find persons whose necessities will force them to let you have more than you should for your money. It is quite easy to produce such persons, and in large numbers, for the more distress there is in a nation, the more cheapness of this sort you can obtain, and your boasted cheapness is thus merely a measure of the extent of your national distress.

There is, indeed, a condition of apparent cheapness, which we confuse, in practice and in reasoning, with the other, namely, the real reduction in cost of articles by right application of labour. But in this case the article is only cheap with reference to its *former* price, the so-called cheapness is only our expression for the sensation of contrast between its former and existing prices. So soon as the new methods of producing the article are established, it ceases to be

But their price is dependent on the human will  
 Such and such a thing is demonstrably good for so much  
 And it may demonstrably be had for so much

But it remains questionable, and in all manner of ways  
 questionable, whether I choose to give so much <sup>19</sup>

This choice is always a relative one. It is a choice to give a price for this, rather than for that,—a resolution to have the thing, if getting it does not involve the loss of a better thing. Price depends, therefore, not only on the cost of the commodity itself, but on its relation to the cost of every other attainable thing.

Farther. The *power* of choice is also a relative one. It depends not merely on our own estimate of the thing, but on everybody else's estimate, therefore on the number and force of the will of the concurrent buyers, and on the existing quantity of the thing in proportion to that number and force.

esteemed either cheap or dear, at the new price, as at the old one, and is felt to be cheap only when accident enables it to be purchased beneath this new value. And it is no advantage to produce the article more easily, except as it enables you to multiply your population. Cheapness of this kind is merely the discovery that more men can be maintained on the same ground, and the question, how many you will maintain in proportion to your means, remains exactly in the same terms that it did before.

A form of immediate cheapness results, however, in many cases, without distress, from the labour of a population where food is redundant, or where the labour by which the food is produced leaves much idle time on their hands, which may be applied to the production of "cheap" articles.

All such phenomena indicate to the political economist places where the labour is unbalanced. In the first case, the just balance is to be effected by taking labourers from the spot where the pressure exists, and sending them to that where food is redundant. In the second, the cheapness is a local accident, advantageous to the local purchaser, disadvantageous to the local producer. It is one of the first duties of commerce to extend the market, and thus give the local producer his full advantage.

Cheapness caused by natural accidents of harvest, weather, &c., is always counterbalanced, in due time, by natural scarcity, similarly caused. It is the part of wise government, and healthy commerce, so to provide in times and places of plenty for times and places of dearth, as that there shall never be waste, nor famine.

Cheapness caused by gluts of the market is merely a disease of clumsy and wanton commerce.

<sup>19</sup> Price has already been defined (p. 163) to be the quantity of labour which the possessor of a thing is willing to take for it. It is best to consider the price to be that fixed by the possessor, because the possessor has absolute power of refusing sale, while the purchaser has no absolute power of compelling it, but the effectual or market price is that at which their estimates coincide.



Hence the price of anything depends on four variables <sup>20</sup>

1 Its cost

2 Its attainable quantity at that cost

3 The number and power of the persons who want it

4 The estimate they have formed of its desirableness

(Its value only affects its price so far as it is contemplated in this estimate, perhaps, therefore, not at all)

Now, in order to show the manner in which price is expressed in terms of a currency, we must assume these four quantities to be known, and the "estimate of desirableness," commonly called the Demand, to be certain. We will take the number of persons at the lowest. Let A and B be two labourers who "demand," that is to say, have resolved to labour for, two articles, *a* and *b*. Their demand for these articles (if the reader likes better, he may say their need) is to be absolute, existence depending on the getting these two things. Suppose, for instance, that they are bread and fuel, in a cold country, and let *a* represent the least quantity of bread, and *b* the least quantity of fuel, which will support a man's life for a day. Let *a* be producible by an hour's labour, but *b* only by two hours' labour.

Then the *cost* of *a* is one hour, and of *b* two (cost, by our definition, being expressible in terms of time). If, therefore, each man worked both for his corn and fuel, each would have to work three hours a day. But they divide the labour for its greater ease <sup>21</sup>. Then if A works three hours, he produces 3 *a*, which is one *a* more than both the men want. And if B works three hours, he produces only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  *b*, or half of *b* less than both want. But if A works three hours and B six, A has 3 *a*, and B has 3 *b*,

<sup>20</sup> The two first of these variables are included in the *x*, and the two last in the *y*, of the formula given at p. 167 of "Unto this Last," and the four are the radical conditions which regulate the price of things on first production, in their price in exchange, the third and fourth of these divide each into two others, forming the Four which are stated at p. 176 of "Unto this Last."

<sup>21</sup> This "greater ease" ought to be allowed for by a diminution in the times of the divided work, but as the proportion of times would remain the same, I do not introduce this unnecessary complexity into the calculation.

a maintenance in the right proportion for both for a day and half, so that each might take half a day's rest. But as B has worked double time, the whole of this day's rest belongs in equity to him. Therefore the just exchange should be, A giving two  $a$  for one  $b$ , has one  $a$  and one  $b$ ,—maintenance for a day. B giving one  $b$  for two  $a$ , has two  $a$  and two  $b$ ,—maintenance for two days.

But B cannot rest on the second day, or A would be left without the article which B produces. Nor is there any means of making the exchange just, unless a third labourer is called in. Then one workman, A, produces  $a$ , and two, B and C, produce  $b$ ,—A, working three hours, has three  $a$ ,—B, three hours,  $1\frac{1}{2}b$ ,—C three hours,  $1\frac{1}{2}b$ . B and C each give half of  $b$  for  $a$ , and all have their equal daily maintenance for equal daily work.

To carry the example a single step farther, let three articles,  $a$ ,  $b$ , and  $c$  be needed.

Let  $a$  need one hour's work,  $b$  two, and  $c$  four, then the day's work must be seven hours, and one man in a day's work can make 7  $a$ , or  $3\frac{1}{2}b$ , or  $1\frac{3}{4}c$ .

Therefore one A works for  $a$ , producing 7  $a$ , two B's work for  $b$ , producing 7  $b$ , four C's work for  $c$ , producing 7  $c$ .

A has six  $a$  to spare, and gives two  $a$  for one  $b$ , and four  $a$  for one  $c$ . Each B has  $2\frac{1}{2}b$  to spare, and gives  $\frac{1}{2}b$  for one  $a$ , and two  $b$  for one  $c$ .

Each C has  $\frac{3}{4}c$  to spare, and gives  $\frac{1}{2}c$  for one  $b$ , and  $\frac{1}{4}c$  for one  $a$ .

And all have their day's maintenance.

Generally, therefore, it follows that if the demand is constant,<sup>22</sup> the relative prices of things are as their costs, or as the quantities of labour involved in production.

Then, in order to express their prices in terms of a currency, we have only to put the currency into the form of orders for a certain quantity of any given article (with us it is in the form of orders for gold), and all quantities

<sup>22</sup> Compare "Unto this Last," p. 167 *et seq*.

of other articles are priced by the relation they bear to the article which the currency claims

But the worth of the currency itself is not in the slightest degree, founded more on the worth of the article which it either claims or consists in (as gold) than on the worth of every other article for which the gold is exchangeable. It is just as accurate to say, "so many pounds are worth an acre of land," as "an acre of land is worth so many pounds." The worth of gold, of land, of houses, and of food, and of all other things, depends at any moment on the existing quantities and relative demands for all and each, and a change in the worth of, or demand for, any one, involves an instantaneously correspondent change in the worth of, and demand for, all the rest—a change as inevitable and as accurately balanced (though often in its process as untraceable) as the change in volume of the outflowing river from some vast lake, caused by change in the volume of the inflowing streams, though no eye can trace, nor instrument detect motion either on its surface, or in the depth.

Thus, then, the real working power or worth of the currency is founded on the entire sum of the relative estimates formed by the population of its possessions, a change in this estimate in any direction (and therefore every change in the national character), instantly alters the value of money, in its second great function of commanding labour. But we must always carefully and sternly distinguish between this worth of currency, dependent on the conceived or appreciated value of what it represents, and the worth of it, dependent on the *existence* of what it represents. A currency is true, or false, in proportion to the security with which it gives claim to the possession of land, house, horse, or picture, but a currency is strong or weak, worth much, or worth little, in proportion to the degree of estimate in which the nation holds the house, horse, or picture which is claimed. Thus the power of the English currency has

been, till of late, largely based on the national estimate of horses and of wine so that a man might always give any price to furnish choicely his stable, or his cellar, and receive public approval therefore but if he gave the same sum to furnish his library, he was called mad, or a Biblio-maniac And although he might lose his fortune by his horses, and his health or life by his cellar, and rarely lost either by his books, he was yet never called a Hippo-maniac nor an Oino-maniac, but only Biblio-maniac, because the current worth of money was understood to be legitimately founded on cattle and wine, but not on literature The prices lately given at sales for pictures and MSS indicate some tendency to change in the national character in this respect, so that the worth of the currency may even come in time to rest, in an acknowledged manner, somewhat on the state and keeping of the Bedford missal, as well as on the health of Caractacus or Blink Bonny, and old pictures be considered property, no less than old port They might have been so before now, but that it is more difficult to choose the one than the other.

Now, observe, all these sources of variation in the power of the currency exist, wholly irrespective of the influences of vice, indolence, and improvidence We have hitherto supposed, throughout the analysis, every professing labourer to labour honestly, heartily, and in harmony with his fellows We have now to bring farther into the calculation the effects of relative industry, honour, and forethought, and thus to follow out the bearings of our second inquiry Who are the holders of the Store and Currency, and in what proportions?

This, however, we must reserve for our next paper— noticing here only that, however distinct the several branches of the subject are, radically, they are so interwoven in their issues that we cannot rightly treat any one, till we have taken cognizance of all Thus the quantity

of the currency in proportion to number of population is materially influenced by the number of the holders in proportion to the non-holders, and this again, by the number of holders of good, or wealth, in proportion to the non-holders of goods. For as, by definition, the currency is a claim to goods which are not possessed, its quantity indicates the number of claimants in proportion to the number of holders, and the force and complexity of claim. For if the claims be not complex, currency as a means of exchange may be very small in quantity. A sells some corn to B, receiving a promise from B to pay in cattle, which A then hands over to C, to get some wine. C in due time claims the cattle from B, and B takes back his promise. These exchanges have, or might have been, all effected with a single coin or promise, and the proportion of the currency to the store would in such circumstances indicate only the circulating vitality of it—that is to say, the quantity and convenient divisibility of that part of the store which the *habits* of the nation keep in circulation. If a cattle breeder is content to live with his household chiefly on meat and milk, and does not want rich furniture, or jewels, or books—if a wine and corn grower maintains himself and his men chiefly on grapes and bread,—if the wives and daughters of families weave and spin the clothing of the household, and the nation, as a whole, remains content with the produce of its own soil and the work of its own hands, it has little occasion for circulating media. It pledges and promises little and seldom, exchanges only so far as exchange is necessary for life. The store belongs to the people in whose hands it is found, and money is little needed either as an expression of right, or practical means of division and exchange.

But in proportion as the habits of the nation become complex and fantastic (and they may be both, without therefore being civilized), its circulating medium must

increase in proportion to its store. If every one wants a little of everything,—if food must be of many kinds, and dress of many fashions,—if multitudes live by work which, ministering to fancy, has its pay measured by fancy, so that large prices will be given by one person for what is valueless to another,—if there are great inequalities of knowledge, causing great inequalities of estimate,—and finally, and worst of all, if the currency itself, from its largeness, and the power which the possession of it implies, becomes the sole object of desire with large numbers of the nation, so that the holding of it is disputed among them as the main object of life—in each and all of these cases, the currency enlarges in proportion to the store, and as a means of exchange and division, as a bond of right, and as an expression of passion, plays a more and more important part in the nation's dealings, character, and life.

Against which part, when, as a bond of Right, it becomes too conspicuous and too burdensome, the popular voice is apt to be raised in a violent and irrational manner, leading to revolution instead of remedy. Whereas all possibility of Economy depends on the clear assertion and maintenance of this bond of right, however burdensome. The first necessity of all economical government is to secure the unquestioned and unquestionable working of the great law of Property—that a man who works for a thing shall be allowed to get it, keep it, and consume it, in peace, and that he who does not eat his cake to-day, shall be seen, without grudging, to have his cake to-morrow. This, I say, is the first point to be secured by social law, without this, no political advance, nay, no political existence, is in any sort possible. Whatever evil, luxury, iniquity, may seem to result from it, this is nevertheless the first of all Equities, and to the enforcement of this, by law and by police-truncheon, the nation must always primarily set its mind—that the cupboard door may have

a firm lock to it, and no man's dinner be carried off by the mob, on its way home from the baker's Which, thus fearlessly asserting, we shall endeavour in next paper to consider how far it may be practicable for the mob itself, also, in due breadth of dish, to have dinners to carry home

## III

## LABOUR AND TRADE THE DISEASE OF DESIRE

It will be seen by reference to the last paper that our present task is to examine the relation of holders of store to holders of currency, and of both to those who hold neither. In order to do this, we must determine on which side we are to place substances such as gold, commonly known as bases of currency. By aid of previous definitions the reader will now be able to understand closer statements than have yet been possible.

The currency of any country consists of every document acknowledging debt which is transferable in the country.

This transferableness depends upon its intelligibility and credit. Its intelligibility depends chiefly on the difficulty of forging anything like it,—its credit much on national character, but ultimately always on the existence of substantial means of meeting its demand.

As the degrees of transferableness are variable, (some documents passing only in certain places, and others passing, if at all, for less than their inscribed value,) both the mass and, so to speak, fluidity, of the currency, are variable. True or perfect currency flows freely, like a pure stream, it becomes sluggish or stagnant in proportion to the quantity of less transferable matter which mixes with it, adding to its bulk, but diminishing its purity. Substances of intrinsic value, such as gold, mingle also with the currency, and increase, while they modify, its power, these are carried by it as stones are carried by a torrent, sometimes momentarily impeding, sometimes concentrating its force, but not affecting its purity. These substances of intrinsic value may be also



stamped or signed so as to become acknowledgments of debt, and then become, so far as they operate independently of their intrinsic value, part of the real currency

Deferring consideration of minor forms of currency, consisting of documents bearing private signature, we will examine the principle of legally authorized or national currency

This, in its perfect condition, is a form of public acknowledgment of debt, so regulated and divided that any person presenting a commodity of tried worth in the public market, shall, if he please, receive in exchange for it a document giving him claim to the return of its equivalent, (1) in any place, (2) at any time, and (3) in any kind

When currency is quite healthy and vital, the persons entrusted with its management are always able to give on demand either,

A The assigning document for the assigned quantity of goods Or,

B The assigned quantity of goods for the assigning document

If they cannot give document for goods, the national exchange is at fault

If they cannot give goods for document, the national credit is at fault

The nature and power of the document are therefore to be examined under the three relations which it bears to Place, Time, and Kind

I It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth in any Place Its use in this function is to save carriage, so that parting with a bushel of corn in London, we may receive an order for a bushel of corn at the Antipodes, or elsewhere To be perfect in this use, the substance of currency must be to the maximum portable, credible, and intelligible Its non-acceptance or discredit results always from some form of ignorance or dishonour so

far as such interruptions rise out of differences in denomination, there is no ground for their continuance among civilized nations. It may be convenient in one country to use chiefly copper for coinage, in another silver, and in another gold,—reckoning accordingly in centimes, francs, or sequins, but that a French franc should be different in weight from an English shilling, and an Austrian zwanziger vary in weight and alloy from both, is wanton loss of commercial power.

2 It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth at any Time. In this second use, currency is the exponent of accumulation: it renders the laying up of store at the command of individuals unlimitedly possible,—whereas, but for its intervention, all gathering would be confined within certain limits by the bulk of property, or by its decay, or the difficulty of its guardianship. “I will pull down my barns and build greater,” cannot be a daily saying, and all material investment is enlargement of care. The national currency transfers the guardianship of the store to many, and preserves to the original producer the right of re-entering on its possession at any future period.

3 It gives claim (practical, though not legal) to the return of equivalent wealth in any Kind. It is a transferable right, not merely to this or that, but to anything, and its power in this function is proportioned to the range of choice. If you give a child an apple or a toy, you give him a determinate pleasure, but if you give him a penny, an indeterminate one, proportioned to the range of selection offered by the shops in the village. The power of the world’s currency is similarly in proportion to the openness of the world’s fair, and commonly, enhanced by the brilliancy of external aspect, rather than solidity of its wares.

We have said that the currency consists of orders for equivalent goods. If equivalent, their quality must be guaranteed. The kinds of goods chosen for specific claim

must, therefore, be capable of test, while, also, that a store may be kept in hand to meet the call of the currency, smallness of bulk, with great relative value, is desirable, and indestructibility, over at least a certain period, essential

Such indestructibility, and facility of being tested, are united in gold, its intrinsic value is great, and its imaginary value greater, so that, partly through indolence, partly through necessity and want of organization, most nations have agreed to take gold for the only basis of their currencies,—with this grave disadvantage, that its portability enabling the metal to become an active part of the medium of exchange, the stream of the currency itself becomes opaque with gold—half currency and half commodity, in unison of functions which partly neutralize, partly enhance each other's force

They partly neutralize, since in so far as the gold is commodity, it is bad currency, because liable to sale, and in so far as it is currency, it is bad commodity, because its exchange value interferes with its practical use Especially its employment in the higher branches of the arts becomes unsafe on account of its liability to be melted down for exchange

Again They partly enhance, since in so far as the gold has acknowledged intrinsic value, it is good currency, because everywhere acceptable, and in so far as it has legal exchangeable value, its worth as a commodity is increased We want no gold in the form of dust or crystal, but we seek for it coined, because in that form it will pay baker and butcher And this worth in exchange not only absorbs a large quantity in that use,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The waste of labour in obtaining the gold, though it cannot be estimated by help of any existing data, may be understood in its bearing on entire economy by supposing it limited to transactions between two persons If two farmers in Australia have been exchanging corn and cattle with each other for years keeping their accounts of reciprocal debt in any simple way, the sum of the possessions of either would not be diminished, though the part of it which was lent or borrowed were only reckoned by marks on a stone, or notches on a tree, and the one counted himself accordingly, so many scratches, or so many notches,

but greatly increases the effect on the imagination of the quantity used in the arts. Thus, in brief, the force of the functions is increased, but their precision blunted by their unison.

These inconveniences, however, attach to gold as a basis of currency on account of its portability and preciousness. But a far greater inconvenience attaches to it as the only legal basis of currency. Imagine gold to be only attainable in masses weighing several pounds each, and its value, like that of malachite or marble, proportioned to its largeness of bulk,—it could not then get itself confused with the currency in daily use, but it might still remain as its basis, and this second inconvenience would still affect it, namely, that its significance as an expression of debt, varies, as that of every other article would, with the popular estimate of its desirableness, and with the quantity offered in the market. My power of obtaining other goods for gold depends always on the strength of public passion for gold, and on the limitation of its quantity, so that when either of two things happen—that the world esteems gold less, or finds it more easily—my right of claim is in that degree effaced, and it has been even gravely maintained that a discovery of a mountain of gold would cancel the National Debt, in other words, that men may be paid for what costs much in what costs nothing. Now, it is true that there is little chance of sudden convulsion in this respect, the world will not rapidly increase in wisdom so as to despise gold, and perhaps may even desire it more eagerly the more easily it is obtained, nevertheless, the right of debt ought not to rest on a basis of imagination; nor should the frame of a national currency

better than the other. But it would soon be seriously diminished if, discovering gold in their fields, each resolved only to accept golden counters for a reckoning, and accordingly, whenever he wanted a sack of corn or a cow, was obliged to go and wash sand for a week before he could get the means of giving a receipt for them.

vibrate with every miser's panic and every merchant's imprudence

There are two methods of avoiding this insecurity, which would have been fallen upon long ago, if, instead of calculating the conditions of the supply of gold, men had only considered how the world might live and manage its affairs without gold at all <sup>24</sup> One is, to base the currency on substances of truer intrinsic value, the other, to base it on several substances instead of one If I can only claim gold, the discovery of a golden mountain starves me, but if I can claim bread, the discovery of a continent of cornfields need not trouble me If, however, I wish to exchange my bread for other things, a good harvest will for the time limit my power in this respect, but if I can claim either bread, iron, or silk at pleasure, the standard of value has three feet instead of one, and will be proportionately firm Thus, ultimately the steadiness of currency depends upon the breadth of its base, but the difficulty of organization increasing with this breadth, the discovery of the condition at once safest and most convenient<sup>25</sup> can only be by long analysis, which must for the present be deferred Gold or silver<sup>26</sup> may always be retained in limited use, as a luxury of coinage and unquestionless standard, of one weight and alloy among all nations, varying only in the die The purity of coinage, when metallic, is closely indicative of the honesty of the

<sup>24</sup> It is difficult to estimate the curious futility of discussions such as that which lately occupied a section of the British Association, on the absorption of gold, while no one can produce even the simplest of the data necessary for the inquiry To take the first occurring one,—What means have we of ascertaining the weight of gold employed this year in the toilettes of the women of Europe (not to speak of Asia), and, supposing it known, what means of conjecturing the weight by, which, next year, their fancies, and the changes of style among their jewellers will diminish or increase it?

<sup>25</sup> See, in Pope's Epistle to Lord Bathurst, his sketch of the difficulties and uses of a currency literally "pecuniary"—

"His Grace will game—to White's a bull be led," &c

<sup>26</sup> Perhaps both, perhaps silver only It may be found expedient ultimately to leave gold free for use in the arts As a means of reckoning, the standard might be, and in some cases has already been entirely ideal —See Mill's *Political Economy*, book iii, chap 7, at beginning

system of revenue, and even of the general dignity of the State <sup>27</sup>

Whatever the article or articles may be which the national currency promises to pay, a premium on that article indicates bankruptcy of the Government in that proportion, the division of its assets being restrained only by the remaining confidence of the holders of notes in the return of prosperity to the firm. Incontrovertible currencies, those of forced acceptance, or of unlimited issue, are merely various modes of disguising taxation, and delaying its pressure, until it is too late to interfere with its causes. To do away with the possibility of such disguise would have been among the first results of a true economical science, had any such existed, but there have been too many motives for the concealment, so long as it could by any artifices be maintained, to permit hitherto even the founding of such a science.

And indeed, it is only through evil conduct, wilfully persisted in, that there is any embarrassment either in the theory or working of currency. No exchequer is ever embarrassed, nor is any financial question difficult of solution, when people keep their practice honest, and their heads cool. But when governments lose all office of pilotage, protection, scrutiny, and witness, and live only in magnificence of proclaimed larceny, effulgent mendacity, and polished mendicity or when the people, choosing Speculation (the *s* usually redundant in the spelling) instead of Toil, pursue no dishonesty with chastisement, that each may with impunity take his dishonest turn, and enlarge their lust of wealth through ignorance of its use, making their harlot of the dust, and setting Earth the Mother at the mercy of Earth the Destroyer, so that she has to seek in hell the children

<sup>27</sup> The purity of the drachma and sequin were not without significance of the state of intellect, art, and policy, both in Athens and Venice,—a fact first impressed upon me ten years ago, when, in taking daguerreotypes of Venetian architecture I found no purchaseable gold pure enough to gild them with, but that of the old Venetian sequin.

she left playing in the meadows,—there are no tricks of financial terminology that will save them, all signature and mintage do but magnify the ruin they retard, and even the riches that remain, stagnant or current, change only from the slime of Avernus to the sand of Phlegethon,—quicksand at the embouchure,—land fluently recommended by recent auctioneers as “eligible for building leases”

Finally, then, the power of true currency is fourfold

1 Credit power Its worth in exchange, dependent on public opinion of the stability and honesty of the issuer

2 Real worth Supposing the gold, or whatever else the currency expressly promises, to be required from the issuer, for all his notes, and that the call cannot be met in full Then the actual worth of the document (whatever its credit power) would be, and its actual worth at any moment is to be defined as being, what the division of the assets of the issuer, and his subsequent will to work, would produce for it

3 The exchange power of its base Granting that we can get five pounds in gold for our note, it remains a question how much of other things we can get for five pounds in gold The more of other things exist, and the less gold, the greater this power

4 The power over labour, exercised by the given quantity of the base, or of the things to be got for it The question in this case is, how much work, and (question of questions) *whose* work, is to be had for the food which five pounds will buy This depends on the number of the population, on their gifts, and on their dispositions, with which, down to their slightest humours, and up to their strongest impulses, the power of the currency varies, and in this last of its ranges—the range of passion, price, or praise, (*converso in pretium Deo*), is at once least, and greatest

Such being the main conditions of national currency, we proceed to examine those of the total currency, under

the broad definition, "transferable acknowledgment of debt,"<sup>28</sup> among the many forms of which there are in effect only two, distinctly opposed, namely, the acknowledgments of debts which will be paid, and of debts which will not. Documents, whether in whole or part, of bad debt, being to those of good debt as bad money to bullion, we put for the present these forms of imposture aside (as in analyzing a metal we should wash it clear of dross), and then range, in their exact quantities, the true currency of the country on one side, and the store or property of the country on the other. We place gold, and all such substances, on the side of documents, as far as they operate by signature,—on the side of store as far as they operate by value. Then the currency represents the quantity of debt in the country, and the store the quantity of its possession. The ownership of all the property is divided between the holders of currency and holders of store, and whatever the claiming value of the currency is at any moment, that value is to be deducted from the riches of the store-holders, the deduction being practically made in the payment of rent for houses and lands, of interest on stock, and in other

<sup>28</sup> Under which term, observe, we include all documents of debt which, being honest, might be transferable, though they practically are not transferred, while we exclude all documents which are in reality worthless, though in fact transferred temporarily, as bad money is. The document of honest debt not transferred, is merely to paper currency as gold withdrawn from circulation is to that of bullion. Much confusion has crept into the reasoning on this subject from the idea that withdrawal from circulation is a definable state, whereas it is a gradated state, and undefinable. The sovereign in my pocket is withdrawn from circulation as long as I choose to keep it there. It is no otherwise withdrawn if I bury it, nor even if I choose to make it, and others, into a golden cup, and drink out of them, since a rise in the price of the wine, or of other things, may at any time cause me to melt the cup and throw it back into currency and the bullion operates on the prices of the things in the market as directly, though not as forcibly, while it is in the form of a cup, as it does in the form of a sovereign. No calculation can be founded on my humour in either case. If I like to handle rouleaus, and therefore keep a quantity of gold, to play with, in the form of jointed basaltic columns, it is all one in its effect on the market as if I kept it in the form of twisted filigree, or, steadily *amicus lamnæ*, beat the narrow gold pieces into broad ones, and dined off them. The probability is greater that I break the rouleau than that I melt the plate, but the increased probability is not calculable. Thus, documents are only withdrawn from the currency when cancelled, and bullion when it is so effectually lost as that the probability of finding it is no greater than of finding new gold in the mine.



ways to be hereafter examined. At present I wish only to note the broad relations of the two great classes—the currency-holders and store-holders.<sup>29</sup> Of course they are partly united, most monied men having possessions of land or other goods, but they are separate in their nature and functions. The currency-holders as a class regulate the demand for labour, and the store-holders the laws of it, the currency-holders determine what shall be produced, and the store-holders the conditions of its production. Farther, as true currency represents by definition debts which will be paid, it represents either the debtor's wealth, or his ability and willingness, that is to say, either wealth existing in his hands transferred to him by the creditor, or wealth which, as he is at some time surely to return it, he is either increasing, or, if diminishing, has the will and strength to reproduce. A sound currency therefore, as by its increase it represents enlarging debt, represents also enlarging means, but in this curious way, that a certain quantity of it marks the deficiency of the wealth of the country from what it would have been if that currency had not existed.<sup>30</sup> In this respect it is like

<sup>29</sup> They are (up to the amount of the currency) simply creditors and debtors—the commercial types of the two great sects of humanity which those words describe, for debt and credit are of course merely the mercantile forms of the words "duty" and "creed," which give the central ideas. Only it is more accurate to say "faith" than "creed," because creed has been applied carelessly to mere forms of words. Duty properly signifies whatever in substance or act one person owes to another, and faith the other's trust in his rendering it. The French "devoir" and "foi" are fuller and clearer words than ours, for, faith being the passive of fact, foi comes straight through fides from fio, and the French keep the group of words formed from the infinitive—fier, "se fier," "se defier," "defiance," and the grand following "défi." Our English "affiance," "defiance," "confidence," "diffidence," retain accurate meanings, but our "faithful" has become obscure from being used for "faithworthy" as well as "full of faith." "His name that sat on him was called Faithful and True."

Trust is the passive of true saying, as faith is the passive of due doing, and the right learning of these etymologies, which are in the strictest sense only to be learned "by heart," is of considerably more importance to the youth of a nation than its reading and ciphering.

<sup>30</sup> For example, suppose an active peasant, having got his ground into good order and built himself a comfortable house, finding still time on his hands, sees one of his neighbours little able to work, and ill lodged, and offers to build him also a house, and to put his land in order, on condition of receiving for a given period rent for the building and tithe of the fruits. The offer is accepted, and a document given promissory of rent and tithe. This note is money. It can only

the detritus of a mountain, assume that it lies at a fixed angle, and the more the detritus, the larger must be the mountain, but it would have been larger still, had there been none

Finally, though, as above stated, every man possessing money has usually also some property beyond what is necessary for his immediate wants, and men possessing property usually also hold currency beyond what is necessary for their immediate exchanges, it mainly determines the class to which they belong, whether in their eyes the money is an adjunct of the property, or the property of the money. In the first case the holder's pleasure is in his possessions, and in his money subordinately, as the means of bettering or adding to them. In the second, his pleasure is in his money, and in his possessions only as representing it. In the first case the money is as an atmosphere surrounding the wealth, rising from it and raining back upon it, but in the second, it is as a deluge, with the wealth floating, and for the most part perishing in it. The shortest distinction between the men is that the one wishes always to buy, and the other to sell.

Such being the great relations of the classes, their several characters are of the highest importance to the nation, for on the character of the store-holders depends the preservation, display, and serviceableness of its wealth,—on that of the currency-holders its nature, and in great part its distribution, on that of both, its reproduction.

The store-holders are either constructive, neutral, or destructive, and in subsequent papers we shall, with respect to every kind of wealth, examine the relative power of the store-holder for its improvement or destruc-

be good money if the man who has incurred the debt so far recovers his strength as to be able to take advantage of the help he has received and meet the demand of the note, if he lets his house fall to ruin, and his field to waste, his promissory note will soon be valueless but the existence of the note at all is a consequence of his not having worked so stoutly as the other. Let him gain as much as to be able to pay back the entire debt, the note is cancelled, and we have two rich store-holders and no currency.

tion, and we shall then find it to be of incomparably greater importance to the nation in whose hands the thing is put, than how much of it is got, and that the character of the holders may be conjectured by the quality of the store, for such and such a man always asks for such and such a thing, nor only asks for it, but if to be bettered, betters it so that possession and possessor reciprocally act on each other through the entire sum of national possession. The base nation asking for base things sinks daily to deeper vileness of nature and of use, while the noble nation, asking for noble things, rises daily into diviner eminence in both, the tendency to degradation being surely marked by *ἀραξία*, carelessness as to the hands in which things are put, competition for the acquisition of them, disorderliness in accumulation, inaccuracy in reckoning, and bluntness in conception as to the entire nature of possession.

Now, the currency-holders always increase in number and influence in proportion to the bluntness of nature and clumsiness of the store-holders, for the less use people can make of things the more they tire of them, and want to change them for something else, and all frequency of change increases the quantity and power of currency, while the large currency-holder himself is essentially a person who never has been able to make up his mind as to what he will have, and proceeds, therefore, in vague collection and aggregation, with more and more infuriate passion, urged by complacency in progress and pride of conquest.

While, however, there is this obscurity in the nature of possession of currency, there is a charm in the *absolute-ness* of it, which is to some people very enticing. In the enjoyment of real property others must partly share. The groom has some enjoyment of the stud, and the gardener of the garden, but the money is, or seems shut up, it is wholly enviable. No one else can have part in any complacencies arising from it.

The power of arithmetical comparison is also a great thing to unimaginative people. They know always they are so much better than they were, in money, so much better than others, in money, wit cannot be so compared, nor character. My neighbour cannot be convinced I am wiser than he is, but he can that I am worth so much more, and the universality of the conviction is no less flattering than its clearness. Only a few can understand, none measure, superiorities in other things, but everybody can understand money, and count it.

Now, these various temptations to accumulation would be politically harmless if what was vainly accumulated had any fair chance of being wisely spent. For as accumulation cannot go on for ever, but must some day end in its reverse—if this reverse were indeed a beneficial distribution and use, as irrigation from reservoir, the fever of gathering, though perilous to the gatherer, might be serviceable to the community. But it constantly happens (so constantly, that it may be stated as a political law having few exceptions), that what is unreasonably gathered is also unreasonably spent by the persons into whose hands it finally falls. Very frequently it is spent in war, or else in a stupifying luxury, twice hurtful, both in being indulged by the rich and witnessed by the poor. So that the *mal tener* and *mal dare* are as correlative as complementary colours, and the circulation of wealth, which ought to be soft, steady, strong, far-sweeping, and full of warmth, like the Gulf stream, being narrowed into an eddy, and concentrated on a point, changes into the alternate suction and surrender of Charybdis. Which is indeed, I doubt not, the true meaning of that marvellous fable, “infinite,” as Bacon said of it, “in matter of meditation.”<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> It is a strange habit of wise humanity to speak in enigmas only, so that the highest truths and usefulest laws must be hunted for through whole picture-galleries of dreams, which to the vulgar seem dreams only. Thus Homer, the Greek tragedians, Plato, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Goethe, have hidden all that is chiefly serviceable in their work, and in all the various literature they

This disease of desire having especial relation to the great art of Exchange, or Commerce, we must, in order

absorbed and re-embodied, under types which have rendered it quite useless to the multitude. What is worse, the two primal declarers of moral discovery, Homer and Plato, are partly at issue, for Plato's logical power quenched his imagination, and he became incapable of understanding the purely imaginative element either in poetry or painting, he therefore somewhat overrates the pure discipline of passionate art in song and music, and misses that of meditative art. There is, however, a deeper reason for his distrust of Homer. His love of justice, and reverently religious nature made him dread, as death, every form of fallacy, but chiefly, fallacy respecting the world to come (his own myths being only symbolic exponents of a rational hope). We shall perhaps now every day discover more clearly how right Plato was in this, and feel ourselves more and more wonderstruck that men such as Homer and Dante (and, in an inferior sphere, Milton), not to speak of the great sculptors and painters of every age, have permitted themselves, though full of all nobleness and wisdom, to coin idle imaginations of the mysteries of eternity, and mould the fancies of the families of the earth by the courses of their own vague and visionary arts while the indisputable truths respecting human life and duty, respecting which they all have but one voice, lie hidden behind these veils of phantasy, unsought and often unsuspected. I will gather carefully, out of Dante and Homer, what of this kind bears on our subject, in its due place, the first broad intention of their symbols may be sketched at once. The rewards of a worthy use of riches, subordinate to other ends, are shown by Dante in the fifth and sixth orbs of Paradise, for the punishment of their unworthy use, three places are assigned, one for the avaricious and prodigal whose souls are lost (Hell Canto 7), one for the avaricious and prodigal whose souls are capable of purification (Purgatory Canto 10), and one for the usurers, of whom none can be redeemed (Hell Canto 17). The first group, the largest in all hell, (*gente piu che altrove troppa*), meet in contrary currents, *as the waves of Charybdis*, casting weights at each other from opposite sides. This weariness of contention is the chief element of their torture, so marked by the beautiful lines beginning *Or puoi, figliuol, &c* (but the usurers, who made their money inactively, *sit* on the sand, equally without rest, however, "*Dì qua, di là soccorren,*" &c). For it is not avarice but *contention* for riches, leading to this double misuse of them, which, in Dante's light, is the unredeemable sin. The place of its punishment is guarded by Plutus "the great enemy," and "*la fiera crudele*," a spirit quite different from the Greek Plutus, who though old and blind, is not cruel and is curable, so as to become far-sighted (*ὁ τυφλὸς δὲ γὰρ βλέπων*—Plato's epithets in first book of the laws). Still more does this Dantesque type differ from the resplendent Plutus of Goethe in the second part of Faust, who is the personified power of wealth for good or evil, not the passion for wealth, and again from the Plutus of Spenser, who is the passion of mere aggregation. Dante's Plutus is specially and definitely the spirit of Contention and Competition, or Evil Commerce, and because, as I showed in my last paper, this kind of commerce "makes all men strangers," his speech is unintelligible, and no single soul of all those ruined by him has recognizable features.

("La sconscente vita—

Ad ogni conoscenza o li fa brum")

On the other hand, the redeemable sins of advance and prodigality are, in Dante's sight, those which are without deliberate or calculated operation. The lust, or lavishness, of riches can be purged, so long as there has been no servile consistency of dispute and competition for them. The sin is spoken of as that of degradation by the love of earth, it is purified by deeper humiliation—the souls crawl on their bellies, their chant, "my soul cleaveth unto the dust." But the

to complete our code of first principles, shortly state the nature and limits of that art

As the currency conveys right of choice out of many things in exchange for one, so Commerce is the agency by

spirits here condemned are all recognizable, and even the worst examples of the thirst for gold, which they are compelled to tell the histories of during the night, are of men swept by the passion of avarice into violent crime, but not sold to its steady work

The precept given to each of these spirits for its deliverance is—Turn thine eyes to the lucre, (lure) which the Eternal King rolls with the mighty wheels Otherwise, the wheels of the "Greater Fortune," of which the constellation is ascending when Dante's dream begins Compare George Herbert,

"Lift up thy head,  
Take stars for money, stars, not to be told  
By any art, yet to be purchased "

And Plato's notable sentence in the third book of the *Polity*—"Tell them they have divine gold and silver in their souls for ever, that they need no money stamped of men—neither may they otherwise than impiously mingle the gathering of the divine with the mortal treasure, for through that which the law of the multitude has coined, endless crimes have been done and suffered, but in theirs is neither pollution nor sorrow "

At the entrance of this place of punishment an evil spirit is seen by Dante, quite other than the "Gran Nemico" The great enemy is obeyed knowingly and willingly, but this spirit—feminine—and called a Siren—is the "Deceitfulness of riches," *ἀπάτη πλοῦτος* of the gospels, winning obedience by guile This is the Idol of Riches, made doubly phantasmal by Dante's seeing her in a dream She is lovely to look upon and enchants by her sweet singing, but her womb is loathsome Now Dante does not call her one of the Sirens carelessly, any more than he speaks of Charybdis carelessly, and though he had only got at the meaning of the Homeric fable through Virgil's obscure tradition of it, the clue he has given us is quite enough Bacon's interpretation, "the Sirens, or pleasures," which has become universal since his time, is opposed alike to Plato's meaning and Homer's The Sirens are not pleasures but Desires in the *Odyssey* they are the phantoms of vain desire, but in Plato's vision of Destiny, phantoms of constant Desire, singing each a different note on the circles of the distaff of Necessity, but forming one harmony, to which the three great Fates put words Dante, however, adopted the Homeric conception of them, which was that they were demons of the Imagination, not carnal (desire of the eyes, not lust of the flesh), therefore said to be daughters of the Muses Yet not of the muses, heavenly or historical, but of the muse of pleasure, and they are at first winged, because even vain hope excites and helps when first formed, but afterwards, contending for the possession of the imagination with the muses themselves, they are deprived of their wings, and thus we are to distinguish the Siren power from the power of Circe, who is no daughter of the muses, but of the strong elements, Sun and Sea, her power is that of frank, and full vital pleasure, which if governed and watched, nourishes men, but, unwatched, and having no "moly," bitterness or delay, mixed with it, turns men into beasts, but does not slay them, leaves them, on the contrary power of revival She is herself indeed an Enchantress,—pure Animal life, transforming—or degrading—but always wonderful (she puts the stores on board the ship invisibly, and is gone again, like a ghost), even the wild beasts rejoice and are softened around her cave, to men, she gives no rich feast nothing but pure and right nourishment,—Pramnian wine, cheese, and flour, that is, corn, milk, and wine, the three great sustainers of life—it is their own fault if these make swine of them, and swine are chosen merely as

which the power of choice is obtained, and countries producing only timber can obtain for their timber silk and gold, or, naturally producing only jewels and frankincense, can obtain for them cattle and corn. In this

the type of consumption, as Plato's *ὁδὸν πόλις*, in the second book of the *Polity*, and perhaps chosen by Homer with a deeper knowledge of the likeness in variety of nourishment, and internal form of body

"Et quel est, s'il vous plaît, cet audacieux animal qui se permet d'être bêt au dedans comme une jolie petite fille?"

"Hélas! chère enfant, j'ai honte de le nommer, et il ne faudra pas m'en vouloir C'est c'est le cochon Ce n'est pas précisément flatteur pour vous, mais nous en sommes tous là, et si cela vous contrarie par trop, il faut aller vous plaindre au bon Dieu qui a voulu que les choses fussent arrangées ainsi seulement le cochon, qui ne pense qu'à manger, a l'estomac bien plus vaste que nous, et c'est toujours une consolation" (*Histoire d'une Bouchée de Pain*, Lettre ix)

But the deadly Sirens are in all things opposed to the Circean power They promise pleasure, but never give it They nourish in no wise, but slay by slow death And whereas they corrupt the heart and the head, instead of merely betraying the senses, there is no recovery from their power, they do not tear nor snatch, like Scylla, but the men who have listened to them are poisoned, and waste away Note that the Sirens' field is covered, not merely with the bones, but with the *skins* of those who have been consumed there They address themselves, in the part of the song which Homer gives, not to the passions of Ulysses, but to his vanity, and the only man who ever came within hearing of them, and escaped untempted, was Orpheus, who silenced the vain imaginations by singing the praises of the gods

It is, then, one of these Sirens whom Dante takes as the phantasm or deceitfulness of riches, but note further, that she says it was her song that deceived Ulysses Look back to Dante's account of Ulysses' death, and we find it was not the love of money, but pride of knowledge, that betrayed him, whence we get the clue to Dante's complete meaning that the souls whose love of wealth is pardonable have been first deceived into pursuit of it by a dream of its higher uses, or by ambition His Siren is therefore the Philotimé of Spenser, daughter of Mammon—

"Whom all that folk with such contention  
Do flock about, my deare, my daughter is—  
Honour and dignitie from her alone  
Derived are"

By comparing Spencer's entire account of this Philotimé with Dante's of the Wealth-Siren, we shall get at the full meaning of both poets, but that of Homer lies hidden much more deeply For his Sirens are indefinite, and they are desires of any evil thing, power of wealth is not specially indicated by him, until, escaping the harmonious danger of imagination, Ulysses has to choose between two practical ways of life, indicated by the two *rocks* of Scylla and Charybdis The monsters that haunt them are quite distinct from the rocks themselves, which, having many other subordinate significations, are in the main Labour and Idleness, or getting and spending, each with its attendant monster, or betraying demon The rock of gaining has its summit in the clouds, invisible, and not to be climbed, that of spending is low, but marked by the cursed fig-tree, which has leaves but no fruit We know the type elsewhere, and there is a curious lateral allusion to it by Dante when Jacopo di Sant' Andrea, who had ruined himself by profusion and committed suicide, scatters the leaves of the bush of Lotto degli Agli, endeavouring to hide himself among them We shall hereafter examine the

function commerce is of more importance to a country in proportion to the limitations of its products and the restlessness of its fancy,—generally of greater importance towards Northern latitudes

Commerce is necessary, however, not only to exchange local products, but local skill Labour requiring the agency of fire can only be given abundantly in cold countries, labour requiring suppleness of body and sensitiveness of touch only in warm ones, labour involving accurate vivacity of thought only in temperate ones, while peculiar imaginative actions are produced by extremes of heat and cold, and of light and darkness The production of great art is limited to climates warm enough to admit of repose in the open air, and cool enough to render such repose delightful Minor variations in modes of skill distinguish every locality The labour which at any place is easiest, is in that place cheapest, and it becomes often desirable that products raised in one country should be wrought in another Hence have arisen discussions on "International values" which will be one day

type completely, here I will only give an approximate rendering of Homer's words, which have been obscured more by translation than even by tradition—"They are overhanging rocks The great waves of blue water break round them, and the blessed Gods call them the Wanderers

"By one of them no winged thing can pass—not even the wild doves that bring ambrosia to their father Jove—but the smooth rock seizes its sacrifice of them" (Not even ambrosia to be had without Labour The word is peculiar—as a part of anything is offered for sacrifice, especially used of heave-offering) "It reaches the wide heaven with its top, and a dark-blue cloud rests on it, and never passes, neither does the clear sky hold it in summer nor in harvest Nor can any man climb it—not if he had twenty feet and hands, for it is smooth as though it were hewn

"And in the midst of it is a cave which is turned the way of hell And therein dwells Scylla, whining for prey her cry, indeed, is no louder than that of a newly-born whelp but she herself is an awful thing—nor can any creature see her face and be glad, no, though it were a god that rose against her For she has twelve feet, all fore-feet, and six necks, and terrible heads on them, and each has three rows of teeth, full of black death

"But the opposite rock is lower than this, though but a bow-shot distant, and upon it there is a great fig-tree, full of leaves, and under it the terrible Charybdis sucks down the black water Thrice in the day she sucks it down, and thrice casts it up again, be not thou there when she sucks down, for Neptune himself could not save thee"

The reader will find the meaning of these types gradually elicited as we proceed.



remembered as highly curious exercises of the human mind. For it will be discovered, in due course of tide and time, that international value is regulated just as inter-provincial or inter-parishional value is. Coals and hops are exchanged between Northumberland and Kent on absolutely the same principles as iron and wine between Lancashire and Spain. The greater breadth of an arm of the sea increases the cost, but does not modify the principle of exchange, and a bargain written in two languages will have no other economical results than a bargain written in one. The distances of nations are measured not by seas, but by ignorances, and their divisions determined, not by dialects, but by enmities.

Of course, a system of international values may always be constructed if we assume a relation of moral law to physical geography, as, for instance, that it is right to cheat across a river, though not across a road, or across a lake, though not across a river, or over a mountain, though not across a lake, &c. —again, a system of such values may be constructed by assuming similar relations of taxation to physical geography, as, for instance, that an article should be taxed in crossing a river, but not in crossing a road, or in being carried over a mountain, but not over a ferry, &c. such positions are indeed not easily maintained when once put in logical form but one law of international value is maintainable in any form, namely, that the farther your neighbour lives from you, and the less he understands you, the more you are bound to be true in your dealings with him, because your power over him is greater in proportion to his ignorance, and his remedy more difficult in proportion to his distance.

I have just said the breadth of sea increases the cost of exchange. Exchange, or commerce, as such, is always costly, the sum of the value of the goods being diminished by the cost of their conveyance, and by the maintenance of the persons employed in it, so that it is only when there is advantage to both producers (in getting

the one thing for the other), greater than the loss in conveyance, that the exchange is expedient. And it is only justly conducted when the porters kept by the producers, (commonly called merchants) look only for pay, and not for profit. For in just commerce there are but three parties—the two persons or societies exchanging and the agent or agents of exchange. The value of the things to be exchanged is known by both the exchangers, and each receives equivalent value, neither gaining nor losing (for whatever one gains the other loses). The intermediate agent is paid an equal and known per-centage by both, partly for labour in conveyance, partly for care, knowledge, and risk, every attempt at concealment of the amount of the pay indicates either effort on the part of the agent to obtain exorbitant per-centage, or effort on the part of the exchangers to refuse him a just one. But for the most part it is the first, namely, the effort on the part of the merchant to obtain larger profit (so-called) by buying cheap and selling dear. Some part, indeed, of this larger gain is deserved, and might be openly demanded, because it is the reward of the merchant's knowledge, and foresight of probable necessity; but the greater part of such gain is unjust, and unjust in this most fatal way, that it depends first on keeping the exchangers ignorant of the exchange value of the articles, and secondly, on taking advantage of the buyer's need and the seller's poverty. It is, therefore, one of the essentials, and quite the most fatal, forms of usury, for usury means merely taking an exorbitant sum for the use of anything, and it is no matter whether the exorbitance is on loan or exchange, in rent or in price—the essence of the usury being that it is obtained by advantage of opportunity or necessity, and not as due reward for labour. All the great thinkers, therefore, have held it to be unnatural and impious, in so far as it feeds on the distress of others, or their folly.<sup>32</sup> Never-

<sup>32</sup> Hence Dante's companionship of Cahors, *Inf.*, canto xi, supported by the view taken of the matter throughout the middle ages, in common with the Greeks

theless, attempts to repress it by law, (in other words, to regulate prices by law so far as their variations depend on iniquity, and not on nature) must for ever be ineffective, though Plato, Bacon, and the First Napoleon—all three of them men who knew somewhat more of humanity than the "British merchant" usually does, tried their hands at it, and have left some (probably) good moderate forms of law, which we will examine in their place. But the only final check upon it must be radical purifying of the national character, for being, as Bacon calls it, "*concessum propter duritiem cordis*," it is to be done away with by touching the heart only, not, however, without medicinal law—as in the case of the other permission, "*propter duritiem*." But in this, more than in anything (though much in all, and though in this he would not himself allow of their application, for his own laws against usury are sharp enough), Plato's words are true in the fourth book of the *Polity*, that neither drugs, nor charms, nor burnings, will touch a deep-lying political sore, any more than a deep bodily one, but only right and utter change of constitution and that "they do not lose their labour who think that by any tricks of law they can get the better of these mischiefs of intercourse, and see not that they hew at a Hydra."

And indeed this Hydra seems so unslayable, and sin sticks so fast between the joinings of the stones of buying and selling, that "to trade" in things, or literally "cross-give" them, has warped itself, by the instinct of nations, into their worst word for fraud, for, because in trade there cannot but be trust, and it seems also that there cannot but also be injury in answer to it, what is merely fraud between enemies becomes treachery among friends and "trader," "traditor" and "traitor" are but the same word. For which simplicity of language there is more reason than at first appears, for as in true commerce there is no "profit," so in true commerce there is no "sale." The idea of sale is that of an interchange between

enemies respectively endeavouring to get the better one of another, but commerce is an exchange between friends, and there is no desire but that it should be just, any more than there would be between members of the same family. The moment there is a bargain over the pottage, the family relation is dissolved—typically, “the days of mourning for my father are at hand.” Whereupon follows the resolve “then will I slay my brother.”

This inhumanity of mercenary commerce is the more notable because it is a fulfilment of the law that the corruption of the best is the worst. For as, taking the body natural for symbol of the body politic, the governing and forming powers may be likened to the brain, and the labouring to the limbs, the mercantile, presiding over circulation and communication of things in changed utilities, is symbolized by the heart, which if it harden, all is lost. And this is the ultimate lesson which the leader of English intellect meant for us (a lesson, indeed, not all his own, but part of the old wisdom of humanity), in the tale of the *Merchant of Venice*, in which the true and incorrupt merchant,—kind and free, beyond every other Shakespearian conception of men,—is opposed to the corrupted merchant, or usurer, the lesson being deepened by the expression of the strange hatred which the corrupted merchant bears to the pure one, mixed with intense scorn,—

“This is the fool that lent out money gratis, look to him, jailor,” (as to lunatic no less than criminal) the enmity, observe, having its symbolism literally carried out by being aimed straight at the heart, and finally foiled by a literal appeal to the great moral law that flesh and blood cannot be weight, enforced by “Portia” (“Portion”), the type of divine Fortune,<sup>33</sup> found, not in

<sup>33</sup> Shakespeare would certainly never have chosen this name had he been forced to retain the Roman spelling. Like Perdita, “lost lady,” or Cordelia, “heart-lady,” Portia is “fortune” lady. The two great relative groups of words, Fortuna, ferro, and fors—Portio, porto, and pars (with the lateral branch, opportunity, un-portune, opportunity, &c.), are of deep and intricate significance, their

gold, nor in silver, but in lead, that is to say, in endurance and patience, not in splendour, and finally taught by her lips also, declaring, instead of the law and quality of "merces," the greater law and quality of mercy, which is not strained, but drops as the rain, blessing him that gives and him that takes. And observe that this "mercy" is not the mean "Misericordia," but the mighty "Gratia," answered by Gratitude, (observe Shylock's leaning on the, to him detestable, word *gratis*, and compare the relations of Grace to Equity given in the second chapter of the second book of the *Memorabilia*), that is to say, it is the gracious or loving, instead of the strained, or competing manner, of doing things, answered, not only with "merces" or pay, but with "merci" or thanks. And this is indeed the meaning of the great benediction "Grace, mercy, and peace," for there can be no peace without grace, (not even by help of rifled cannon),<sup>34</sup> nor even with triplicity of graciousness, for the Greeks, who began but with one Grace, had to open their scheme into three before they had done.

With the usual tendency of long repeated thought, to take the surface for the deep, we have conceived these goddesses as if they only gave loveliness to gesture, whereas their true function is to give graciousness to deed, the other loveliness arising naturally out of that. In which function Charis becomes Charitas,<sup>35</sup> and has a name and praise even greater than that of Faith or Truth, for these

various senses of bringing, abstracting, and sustaining being all centralized by the wheel (which bears and moves at once), or still better, the ball (*spera*) of Fortune,—"*Volve sua spera, e beata si gode*" the motive power of this wheel distinguishing its goddess from the fixed majesty of *Necessitas* with her iron nails, or *ἀνάγκη*, with her pillar of fire and indescendent orbits, *fixed* at the centre. *Portus* and *porta*, and gate in its connexion with gain, form another interesting branch group, and *Mors*, the concentration of delaying, is always to be remembered with *Fors*, the concentration of bringing and bearing, passing on into *Fortis* and *Fortitude*.

<sup>34</sup> Out of whose mouths, indeed, no peace was ever promulgated, but only equipoise of panic, highly tremulous on the edge in changes of the wind.

<sup>35</sup> As *Charis* becomes *Charitas*, the word "Cher," or "Dear," passes from Shylock's sense of it (to buy cheap and sell dear) into Antonio's sense of it emphasized with the final *s* in tender "Cher," and hushed to English calmness in our noble "Cherish."

may be maintained sullenly and proudly, but Charis is in her countenance always gladdening (Aglaia), and in her service instant and humble, and the true wife of Vulcan, or Labour<sup>36</sup> And it is not until her sincerity of function is lost, and her mere beauty contemplated instead of her patience, that she is born again of the foam flake, and becomes Aphrodité, then only capable of joining herself to War and to the enmities of men, instead of to labour and their services Therefore the fable of Mars and Venus is chosen by Homer, picturing himself as Demodocus, to sing at the games in the court of Alcinous Phæacia is the Homeric island of Atlantis, an image of noble and wise government, concealed, how slightly<sup>1</sup> merely by the change of a short vowel for a long one in the name of its queen, yet misunderstood by all later writers, even by Horace in his "pinguis, Phæax que," &c That fable expresses the perpetual error of men in thinking that grace and dignity can only be reached by the soldier, and never by the artizan, so that commerce and the useful arts have had the honour and beauty taken away, and only the Fraud<sup>37</sup> and Pain left to

<sup>36</sup> The reader must not think that any care can be misspent in tracing the connexion and power of the words which we have to use in the sequel Not only does all soundness of reasoning depend on the work thus done in the outset, but we may sometimes gain more by insistence on the expression of a truth, than by much wordless thinking about it, for to strive to express it clearly is often to detect it thoroughly, and education, even as regards thought, nearly sums itself in making men economize their words, and understand them Nor is it possible to estimate the harm which has been done, in matters of higher speculation and conduct, by loose verbiage, though we may guess at it by observing the dislike which people show to having anything about their religion said to them in simple words, because then they understand it Thus congregations meet weekly to invoke the influence of a Spirit of Life and Truth, yet if any part of that character were intelligibly expressed to them by the formulas of the service, they would be offended Suppose, for instance, in the closing benediction, the clergyman were to give its vital significance to the word "Holy," and were to say, "the Fellowship of the Helpful and Honest Ghost be with you, and remain with you always," what would be the horror of many, first at the irreverence of so intelligible an expression, and secondly, at the uncomfortable entry of the suspicion that (while throughout the commercial dealings of the week they had denied the propriety of Help, and possibly of Honesty), the person whose company they had been asking to be blessed with could have no fellowship with knaves

<sup>37</sup> While I have traced the finer and higher laws of this matter for those whom they concern, I have also to note the material law—vulgarly expressed in the proverb, "Honesty is the best policy" That proverb is indeed wholly map-

them, with the lucre Which is, indeed, one great reason of the continual blundering about the offices of government with respect to commerce The higher classes are ashamed to deal with it, and though ready enough to fight for, (or occasionally against) the people,—to preach to them—or judge them, will not break bread for them; the refined upper servant who has willingly looked after the burnishing of the armoury and ordering of the library, not liking to set foot in the larder

Farther still As Charis becomes Charitas on the one side, she becomes—better still—Chara, Joy, on the other, or rather this is her very mother's milk and the beauty of her childhood, for God brings no enduring Love, nor any other good, out of pain, nor out of contention, but out of joy and harmony<sup>38</sup> And in this sense, human and divine, music and gladness, and the measures of both, come into her name, and Cher becomes full-vowelled Cheer, and Cheerful, and Chara, companioned, opens into Choir and Choral

And lastly As Grace passes into Freedom of action,

plicable to matters of private interest It is not true that honesty, as far as material gain is concerned, profits individuals A clever and cruel knave will in a mixed society always be richer than an honest person can be But Honesty is the best "policy," if policy means practice of state For fraud gains nothing in a state It only enables the knaves in it to live at the expense of honest people, while there is for every act of fraud, however small, a loss of wealth to the community Whatever the fraudulent person gains, some other person loses, as fraud produces nothing, and there is, *besides*, the loss of the time and thought spent in accomplishing the fraud, and of the strength otherwise obtainable by mutual help (not to speak of the fevers of anxiety and jealousy in the blood which are a heavy physical loss, as I will show in due time) Practically, when the nation is deeply corrupt, cheat answers to cheat, every one is in turn imposed upon, and there is to the body politic the dead loss of the ingenuity, together with the incalculable mischief of the injury to each defrauded person, producing collateral effect unexpectedly My neighbour sells me bad meat I sell him in return flawed iron We neither of us get one atom of pecuniary advantage on the whole transaction, but we both suffer unexpected inconvenience,—my men get scurvy, and his cattle truck runs off the rails

38 "τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα ζῶα οὐκ ἔχουσιν αἰσθῆσιν τῶν ἐν ταῖς κινήσει τάξεων οὐδὲ ἀπαξίων, οἷς δὴ ρυθμὸς ὄνομα καὶ ἀρμονία ἡμῖν δὲ οὗς εἰπομεν τοὺς θεοὺς (Apollo, the Muses, Bacchus—the grave Bacchus, that is—ruling the choir of age, or Bacchus restraining, 'sæva iene, cum Bercyntio cornu, tympana,' &c.) συγχορεύτας δέδοσθαι, τοὺτους εἶναι καὶ τοὺς δαδῶκotas τῇ ἐνρρυθμίᾳ τε καὶ ἐναρμόνιῳ αἰσθῆσιν μεθ' ἡδονῆς χόρους τε ὠνομακέναι παρὰ τῆς χαρᾶς ἐμφυτον ὄνομα"—Laws, book 11

Charis becomes Eleutheria, or Liberality, a form of liberty quite curiously and intensely different from the thing usually understood by "Liberty" in modern language indeed, much more like what some people would call slavery for a Greek always understood, primarily, by liberty, deliverance from the law of his own passions (or from what the Christian writers call bondage of corruption), and this a complete liberty not having to resist the passion, but making it fawn upon, and follow him—(this may be again partly the meaning of the fawning beasts about the Circean cave, so, again, George Herbert—

Correct thy passion's spite,  
Then may the beasts draw thee to happy light)—

not being merely safe from the Siren, but also unbound from the mast. And it is only in such generosity that any man becomes capable of so governing others as to take true part in any system of national economy. Nor is there any other eternal distinction between the upper and lower classes than this form of liberty, Eleutheria, or benignity, in the one, and its opposite of slavery, Douleia, or malignity, in the other, the separation of these two orders of men, and the firm government of the lower by the higher, being the first conditions of possible wealth and economy in any state,—the Gods giving it no greater gift than the power to discern its freemen, and "*malignum spernere vulgus*"

The examination of this form of Charis must, therefore, lead us into the discussion of the principles of government in general, and especially of that of the poor by the rich, discovering how the Graciousness joined with the Greatness, or Love with Majestas, is the true *Dei Gratia*, or Divine Right, of every form and manner of King, *ie*, specifically, of the thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, and powers of the earth —of the thrones, stable, or "ruling," literally right-doing powers ("*erx eris, recte si facies*" ) of the dominations, lordly, edifying, dominant



and harmonious powers, chiefly domestic, over the "built thing," domus, or house, and inherently twofold, Dominus and Domina, Lord and Lady of the Princedom, pre-eminent, incipient, creative, and demonstrative powers, thus poetic and mercantile, in the "princeps carmen deduxisse" and the merchant-prince of the Virtues or Courages, militant, guiding, or Ducal powers and finally of the Strengths or Forces pure, magistral powers, of the More over the less, and the forceful and free over the weak and servile elements of life

Subject enough for the next paper, involving "economical" principles of some importance, of which, for theme, here is a sentence, which I do not care to translate, for it would sound harsh in English, though, truly, it is one of the tenderest ever uttered by man, which may be meditated over, or rather *through*, in the meanwhile, by any one who will take the pains —

Ἀρ οὖν ὥσπερ ἵππος τῷ ἀνεπιστήμονι μὲν ἐγχειροῦντι δὲ χρῆσθαι ζημία ἐστίν, οὕτω καὶ ἀδελφὸς, ὅταν τις αὐτῷ μὴ ἐπιστάμενος ἐγχειρῇ χρῆσθαι, ζημία ἐστί,

## IV

## LAWS AND GOVERNMENTS LABOUR AND RICHES

It remains, in order to complete the series of our definitions, that we examine the general conditions of government, and fix the sense in which we are to use, in future, the terms applied to them

The government of a state consists in its customs, laws, and councils and their enforcements

## I CUSTOMS

As one person primarily differs from another by fineness of nature, and, secondarily, by fineness of training, so also, a polite nation differs from a savage one, first by the refinement of its nature, and secondly by the delicacy of its customs

In the completeness, or accomplishment of custom, which is the nation's self-government, there are three stages—first, fineness in method of doing or of being,—called the manner or moral of acts; secondly, firmness in holding such method after adoption, so that it shall become a habit in the character *æ*, a constant “having” or “behaving,” and, lastly, practice, or ethical power in performance and endurance, which is the skill following on habit, and the ease reached by frequency of right doing

The sensibility of the nation is indicated by the fineness of its customs, its courage, patience, and temperance by its persistence in them

By sensibility I mean its natural perception of beauty, fitness, and rightness, or of what is lovely, decent, and just faculties dependent much on race, and the primal signs of fine breeding in man, but cultivable also by education, and necessarily perishing without it. True education has, indeed, no other function than the devel-

opment of these faculties, and of the relative will. It has been the great error of modern intelligence to mistake science for education. You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not.

And making him what he will remain for ever for no wash of weeds will bring back the faded purple. And in that dyeing there are two processes—first, the cleansing and wringing out, which is the baptism with water, and then the infusing of the blue and scarlet colours, gentleness and justice, which is the baptism with fire.

The customs and manners of a sensitive and highly-trained race are always Vital: that is to say, they are orderly manifestations of intense life (like the habitual action of the fingers of a musician). The customs and manners of a vile and rude race, on the contrary, are conditions of decay: they are not, properly speaking, habits, but incrustations, not restraints, or forms, of life, but gangrenes,—noisome, and the beginnings of death.

And generally so far as custom attaches itself to indolence instead of action, and to prejudice instead of perception, it takes this deadly character, so that thus

Custom hangs upon us with a weight  
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life

This power and depth are, however, just what give value to custom, when it works with life, instead of against it.

The high ethical training of a nation being threefold, of body, heart, and practice, (compare the statement in the preface to *Unto this Last*,) involves exquisiteness in all its perceptions of circumstance,—all its modes of act,—and all its occupations of thought. It implies perfect Grace, Pitifulness, and Peace, it is irreconcilably inconsistent with filthy or mechanical employments,—with the desire of money,—and with mental states of anxiety, jealousy, and indifference to pain. The present insensibility of the upper classes of Europe to the aspects of

suffering, uncleanness, and crime, binds them not only into one responsibility with the sin, but into one dishonour with the foulness, which rot at their thresholds. The crimes daily recorded in the police courts of London and Paris (and much more those which are *unrecorded*) are a disgrace to the whole body politic,<sup>39</sup> they are, as in the body natural, stains of disease on a face of delicate skin, making the delicacy itself frightful. Similarly, the filth and poverty permitted or ignored in the midst of us are as dishonourable to the whole social body, as in the body natural it is to wash the face, but leave the hands and feet foul. Christ's way is the only true one. begun at the feet, the face will take care of itself.

Yet, since necessarily, in the frame of a nation, nothing but the head can be of gold, and the feet, for the work they have to do, must be part of iron, part of clay,—foul or mechanical work is always reduced by a noble race to the minimum in quantity, and, even then, performed and endured, not without sense of degradation, as a fine temper is wounded by the sight of the lower offices of the body. The highest conditions of human society reached hitherto, have cast such work to slaves,—supposing slavery of a politically defined kind to be done away with, mechanical and foul employment must in all highly organized states take the aspect either of punishment or probation. All criminals should at once be set to the most dangerous and painful forms of it, especially to work in mines and at furnaces,<sup>40</sup> so as to relieve the inno-

<sup>39</sup> "The ordinary brute, who flourishes in the very centre of ornate life, tells us, of unknown depths on the verge of which we totter being bound to thank our stars every day we live that there is not a general outbreak, and a revolt from the yoke of civilization"—*Times* leader, Dec. 25, 1862. Admitting that our stars are to be thanked for our safety, whom are we to thank for the danger?

<sup>40</sup> Our politicians, even the best of them, regard only the distress caused by the *failure* of mechanical labour. The degradation caused by its excess is a far more serious subject of thought, and of future fear. I shall examine this part of our subject at length hereafter. There can hardly be any doubt, at present, cast on the truth of the above passages as all the great thinkers are unanimous on the matter. Plato's words are terrific in their scorn and pity whenever he touches on the mechanical arts. He calls the men employed in them not even human—but partially and diminutively human, "*ἀνθρωπίσκοι*," and opposes such work

cent population as far as possible of merely rough (not mechanical) manual labour, especially agricultural, a large portion should be done by the upper classes,—bodily health, and sufficient contrast and repose for the mental functions, being unattainable without it, what necessarily inferior labour remains to be done, as especially in manufactures, should, and always will, when the relations of society are reverent and harmonious, fall to the lot of those who, for the time, are fit for nothing better. For as, whatever the perfectness of the educational system, there must remain infinite differences between the natures and capacities of men, and these differing natures are generally rangeable under the two qualities of lordly, (or tending towards rule, construction, and harmony), and servile (or tending towards misrule, destruction, and discord), and, since the lordly part is only in a state of profitableness while ruling, and the servile only in a state of redeemableness while serving, the whole health of the state depends on the manifest separation of these two elements of its mind for, if the servile

to noble occupations, not merely as prison is opposed to freedom, but as a convict's dishonoured prison is to the temple, (escape from them being like that of a criminal to the sanctuary), and the destruction caused by them being of soul no less than body—*Rep* vi 9 Compare *Laws* v 11 Xenophon dwells on the evil of occupations at the furnace (root of *βάναντος*), and especially their “*ασχολία*, want of leisure”—*Econ* i 4 (Modern England, with all its pride of education, has lost that first sense of the word “school”, and till it recover that, it will find no other rightly.) His word for the harm to the soul is to “break” it, as we say of the heart—*Econ* i 6 And herein also is the root of the scorn, otherwise apparently most strange and cruel, with which Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare always speak of the populace, for it is entirely true that in great states the lower orders are low by nature as well as by task, being precisely that part of the commonwealth which has been thrust down for its coarseness or unworthiness (by coarseness I mean especially insensibility and irreverence, the “profane” of Horace), and when this ceases to be so, and the corruption and profanity are in the higher instead of the lower orders, there arises, first, helpless confusion, then, if the lower classes deserve power, ensues swift revolution, and they get it but if neither the populace nor their rulers deserve it, there follows mere darkness and dissolution, till, out of the putrid elements, some new capacity of order rises, like grass on a grave, if not, there is no more hope, nor shadow of turning, for that nation Atropos has her way with it.

So that the law of national health is like that of a great lake or sea, in perfect but slow circulation letting the dregs fall continually to the lowest place and the clear water rise, yet so as that there shall be no neglect of the lower orders, but perfect supervision and sympathy, so that if one member suffer, all members shall suffer with it.

part be not separated and rendered visible in service, it mixes with and corrupts the entire body of the state, and if the lordly part be not distinguished, and set to rule, it is crushed and lost, being turned to no account, so that the rarest qualities of the nation are all given to it in vain <sup>41</sup> The effecting of which distinction is the first object, as we shall see presently, of national councils

## II LAWS

These are the definitions and bonds of custom, or, of what the nation desires should become custom

Law is either archic,<sup>42</sup> (of direction), meristic, (of division), or critic, (of judgment) Archic law is that of appointment and precept it defines what is and is not to be done Meristic law is that of balance and distribution it defines what is and is not to be possessed Critic law is that of discernment and award it defines what is and is not to be suffered

If we choose to class the laws of precept and distribution under the general head of "statutes," all law is simply either of statute or judgment, that is, first the establishment of ordinance, and, secondly, the assignment of the reward or penalty due to its observance or violation

To some extent these two forms of law must be associated, and, with every ordinance, the penalty of disobedience to it be also determined But since the degrees and guilt of disobedience vary, the determination of due

<sup>41</sup> "ὀλέγης καὶ ἄλλως γιγνομένης" The bitter sentence never was so true as at this day

<sup>42</sup> Thetic, or Thesmic, would perhaps be a better term than archic, but liable to be confused with some which we shall want relating to Theoria The administrators of the three great divisions of law are severally Archons, Merists, and Dicasts The Archons are the true princes, or beginners of things, or leaders (as of an orchestra), the Merists are properly the Domini, or Lords (law-wards), of houses and nations, the Dicasts properly the judges, and that with Olympian justice, which reaches to heaven and hell The violation of archic law is *αμαρτία* (error), *πονηρία* (failure), or *πλημμέλεια* (discord) The violation of meristic law is *ανομία* (iniquity) The violation of critic law is *ἀδικία* (injury) Iniquity is the central generic term, for all law is *fatal*, it is the division to men of their fate, as the fold of their pasture, it is *νόμος*, as the assigning of their portion, *μοῖρα*

reward and punishment must be modified by discernment of special fact, which is peculiarly the office of the judge, as distinguished from that of the lawgiver and law-sustainer, or king, not but that the two offices are always theoretically, and in early stages, or limited numbers, of society, are often practically, united in the same person or persons

Also, it is necessary to keep clearly in view the distinction between these two kinds of law, because the possible range of law is wider in proportion to their separation. There are many points of conduct respecting which the nation may wisely express its will by a written precept or resolve, yet not enforce it by penalty, and the expedient degree of penalty is always quite a separate consideration from the expedience of the statute, for the statute may often be better enforced by mercy than severity, and is also easier in the bearing, and less likely to be abrogated. Farther, laws of precept have reference especially to youth, and concern themselves with training, but laws of judgment to manhood, and concern themselves with remedy and reward. There is a highly curious feeling in the English mind against educational law: we think no man's liberty should be interfered with till he has done irrevocable wrong, whereas it is then just too late for the only gracious and kingly interference, which is to hinder him from doing it. Make your educational laws strict, and your criminal ones may be gentle, but, leave youth its liberty, and you will have to dig dungeons for age. And it is good for a man that he wear the yoke in his youth: for the yoke of youth, if you know how to hold it, may be of silken thread, and there is sweet chime of silver bells at that bridle rein, but, for the captivity of age, you must forge the iron fetter, and cast the passing bell.

Since no law can be in a final or true sense established, but by right, (all unjust laws involving the ultimate necessity of their own abrogation,) the law-giving can

only become a law-sustaining power in so far as it is Royal, or "right doing,"—in so far, that is, as it rules, not mis-rules, and orders, not dis-orders, the things submitted to it. Throned on this rock of justice the kingly powers become established and establishing, "*θεῖος*," or divine, and, therefore, it is literally true that no ruler can err, so long as he is a ruler, or *ἄρχων οὐδείς ἀμαρτάνει τότε ὅταν ἄρχων ᾖ*, (perverted by careless thought, which has cost the world somewhat, into "the king can do no wrong") Which is a divine right of kings indeed, and quite unassailable, so long as the terms of it are "God and my Right," and not "Satan and my Wrong," which is apt, in some coinages, to appear on the reverse of the die, under a good lens.

Meristic law, or that of the tenure of property, first determines what every individual possesses by right, and secures it to him, and what he possesses by wrong, and deprives him of it. But it has a far higher provisory function: it determines what every man should possess, and puts it within his reach on due conditions, and what he should not possess, and puts this out of his reach conclusively.

Every article of human wealth has certain conditions attached to its merited possession, which, when they are unobserved, possession becomes rapine. The object of meristic law is not only to secure every man his rightful share (the share, that is, which he has worked for, produced, or received by gift from a rightful owner), for, to enforce the due conditions of possession, as far as law may conveniently reach, for instance, that land shall not be wantonly allowed to run to waste, that streams shall not be poisoned by the persons through whose properties they pass, nor air be rendered unwholesome beyond given limits. Laws of this kind exist already in rudimentary degree, but needing large development: the just laws respecting the possession of works of art have not hitherto been so much as conceived, and the daily loss of national



wealth, and of its use, in this respect, is quite incalculable <sup>43</sup> While, finally, in certain conditions of a nation's progress, laws limiting accumulation of property may be found expedient

Critic law determines questions of injury, and assigns due rewards and punishments to conduct <sup>44</sup>

Therefore, in order to true analysis of it, we must understand the real meaning of this word "injury"

We commonly understand by it any kind of harm done by one man to another, but we do not define the idea of harm sometimes we limit it to the harm which the sufferer is conscious of, whereas much the worst injuries are those he is unconscious of, and, at other times, we

<sup>43</sup> These laws need revision quite as much respecting property in national as in private hands For instance the public are under a vague impression, that because they have paid for the contents of the British Museum, every one has an equal right to see and to handle them But the public have similarly paid for the contents of Woolwich arsenal, yet do not expect free access to it, or handling of its contents The British Museum is neither a free circulating library, nor a free school it is a place for the safe preservation, and exhibition on due occasion, of unique books, unique objects of natural history, and unique works of art, its books can no more be used by everybody than its coins can be handled, or its statues cast Free libraries there ought to be in every quarter of London, with large and complete reading-rooms attached, so also free educational institutions should be open in every quarter of London, all day long and till late at night, well lighted, well catalogued, and rich in contents both of art and natural history But neither the British Museum nor National Gallery are schools, they are treasures, and both should be severely restricted in access and in use Unless some order is taken, and that soon, in the MSS department of the Museum (Sir Frederic Madden was complaining of this to me only the other day), the best MSS in the collection will be destroyed, irretrievably, by the careless and continual handling to which they are now subjected

<sup>44</sup> Two curious economical questions arise laterally with respect to this branch of law, namely, the cost of crime, and the cost of judgment The cost of crime is endured by nations ignorantly, not being clearly stated in their budgets, the cost of judgment patiently, (provided only it can be had pure for the money), because the science, or perhaps we ought rather to say the art, of law, is felt to found a noble profession, and discipline, so that civilized nations are usually glad that a number of persons should be supported by funds devoted to disputation and analysis But it has not yet been calculated what the practical value might have been, in other directions, of the intelligence now occupied in deciding, through courses of years, what might have been decided as justly, had the date of judgment been fixed, in as many hours Imagine one half of the funds which any great nation devotes to dispute by law, applied to the determination of physical questions in medicine, agriculture, and theoretic science, and calculate the probable results within the next ten years

I say nothing, yet, of the more deadly, more lamentable loss, involved in the use of purchased instead of personal justice,—*ἐπακτῶ παρ' ἄλλων*—*ἀπορία οἰκείου*

limit the idea to violence, or restraint, whereas much the worse forms of injury are to be accomplished by carelessness, and the withdrawal of restraint

"Injury" is then simply the refusal, or violation, of any man's right or claim upon his fellows which claim, much talked of in modern times, under the term "right," is mainly resolvable into two branches a man's claim not to be hindered from doing what he should, and his claim to be hindered from doing what he should not, these two forms of hindrance being intensified by reward, or help and fortune, or Fors, on one side, and punishment, impediment, and even final arrest or Mors, on the other

Now, in order to a man's obtaining these two rights, it is clearly needful that the *worth* of him should be approximately known, as well as the *want* of worth, which has, unhappily, been usually the principal subject of study for critic law, careful hitherto only to mark degrees of de-merit, instead of merit,—assigning, indeed, to the deficiencies (not always, alas! even to these) just fine, diminution, or (with the broad vowels) damnation, but to the efficiencies, on the other side, which are by much the more interesting, as well as the only profitable part of its subject, assigning in any clear way neither measurement nor aid

Now, it is in this higher and perfect function of critic law, enabling as well as disabling, that it becomes truly kingly or basilican, instead of Draconic (what Providence gave the great, old, wrathful legislator his name?) that is, it becomes the law of man and of life, instead of the law of the worm and of death—both of these laws being set in everlasting poise one against another, and the enforcement of both being the eternal function of the lawgiver, and true claim of every living soul such claim being indeed as straight and earnest to be mercifully hindered, and even, if need be, abolished, when longer existence means only deeper destruction, as to be mercifully helped and recreated when longer existence and new creation

mean nobler life So that what we vulgarly term reward and punishment will be found to resolve themselves mainly into help and hindrance, and these again will issue naturally from true recognition of deserving, and the just reverence and just wrath which follow instinctively on such recognition

I say, "follow," but in reality they *are* the recognition Reverence is but the perceiving of the thing in its entire truth truth reverted is truth revered (vereor and veritas having clearly the same root), so that Goethe is for once, and for a wonder, wrong in that part of the noble scheme of education in Wilhelm Meister, in which he says that reverence is not innate, and must be taught Reverence is as instinctive as anger,—both of them instant on true vision it is sight and understanding that we have to teach, and these *are* reverence Make a man perceive worth, and in its reflection he sees his own relative unworth, and worships thereupon inevitably, not with stiff courtesy, but rejoicingly, passionately, and, best of all, *restfully* for the inner capacity of awe and love is infinite in man, and when his eyes are once opened to the sight of beauty and honour, it is with him as with a lover, who, falling at his mistress's feet, would cast himself through the earth, if it might be, to fall lower, and find a deeper and humbler place And the common insolences and petulances of the people, and their talk of equality, are not irreverence in them in the least, but mere blindness, stupefaction, and fog in the brains,<sup>40</sup> which pass away in the degree that they are raised and purified the first sign of which raising is, that they gain some power of discerning, and some patience in submitting to their true counsellors and governors, the modes of such discernment forming the real "constitution" of the state, and

<sup>40</sup> Compare Chaucer's "villany" (clownishness)

"Full foul and chorlish seemed she,  
And eke villanous for to be,  
And little coulede of norture  
To worship any creature"

not the titles or offices of the discerned person, for it is no matter, save in degree of mischief, to what office a man is appointed, if he cannot fulfil it. And this brings us to the third division of our subject.

### III GOVERNMENT BY COUNCIL

This is the determination, by living authority, of the national conduct to be observed under existing circumstances, and the modification or enlargement, abrogation or enforcement, of the code of national law according to present needs or purposes. This government is necessarily always by council, for though the authority of it may be vested in one person, that person cannot form any opinion on a matter of public interest but by (voluntarily or involuntarily) submitting himself to the influence of others.

This government is always twofold—visible and invisible.

The visible government is that which nominally carries on the national business, determines its foreign relations, raises taxes, levies soldiers, fights battles, or directs that they be fought, and otherwise becomes the exponent of the national fortune. The invisible government is that exercised by all energetic and intelligent men, each in his sphere, regulating the inner will and secret ways of the people, essentially forming its character, and preparing its fate.

Visible governments are the toys of some nations, the diseases of others, the harness of some, the burdens of more, the necessity of all. Sometimes their career is quite distinct from that of the people, and to write it, as the national history, is as if one should number the accidents which befall a man's weapons and wardrobe, and call the list his biography. Nevertheless, a truly noble and wise nation necessarily has a noble and wise visible government, for its wisdom issues in that conclusively. "Not out of the oak, nor out of the rock, but out of the temper of man, is his polity," where the temper inclines, it inclines as Samson by his pillar, and draws all down with it.

Visible governments are, in their agencies, capable of three pure forms, and of no more than three

They are either monarchies, where the authority is vested in one person, oligarchies, when it is vested in a minority, of democracies, when vested in a majority

But these three forms are not only, in practice, variously limited and combined, but capable of infinite difference in character and use, receiving specific names according to their variations, which names, being nowise agreed upon, nor consistently used, either in thought or writing, no man can at present tell, in speaking of any kind of government, whether he is understood, nor in hearing whether he understands. Thus we usually call a just government by one person a monarchy, and an unjust or cruel one, a tyranny, this might be reasonable if it had reference to the divinity of true government, but to limit the term "oligarchy" to government by a few rich people, and to call government by a few wise or noble people "aristocracies," is evidently absurd, unless it were proved that rich people never could be wise, or noble people rich, and farther absurd because there are other distinctions in character, as well as riches or wisdom (greater purity of race, or strength of purpose, for instance), which may give the power of government to the few. So that if we had to give names to every group or kind of minority, we should have verbiage enough. But there is but one right name—"oligarchy."

So also the terms "republic" and "democracy" are confused, especially in modern use, and both of them are liable to every sort of misconception. A republic means, properly, a polity in which the state, with its all, is at every man's service, and every man, with his all, at the state's service—(people are apt to lose sight of the last condition), but its government may nevertheless be oligarchic (consular, or decemviral, for instance), or monarchic (dictatorial). But a democracy means a state in which the government rests directly with the majority

of the citizens And both these conditions have been judged only by such accidents and aspects of them as each of us has had experience of, and sometimes both have been confused with anarchy, as it is the fashion at present to talk of the "failure of republican institutions in America," when there has never yet been in America any such thing as an institution, but only defiance of institution, neither any such thing as a *res-publica*, but only a multitudinous *res-privata*, every man for himself It is not republicanism which fails now in America, it is your model science of political economy, brought to its perfect practice There you may see competition, and the "law of demand and supply" (especially in paper), in beautiful and unhindered operation<sup>46</sup> Lust of wealth, and trust in it, vulgar faith in magnitude and multitude, instead of nobleness, besides that faith natural to backwoodsmen,—"*lucum ligna*,"—perpetual self-contemplation, issuing in passionate vanity, total ignorance of the finer and higher arts, and of all that they teach and bestow,<sup>47</sup> and the discontent of energetic minds unoccupied, frantic with hope of uncomprehended change, and progress they know not whither,<sup>48</sup>—these are the things that have "failed" in America, and yet not altogether failed—it is not collapse, but collision, the greatest railroad accident on record, with fire caught from the furnace, and Catiline's quenching "*non aquâ, sed ruinâ*" But I

<sup>46</sup> Supply and demand! Alas, for what noble work was there ever any audible "demand" in that poor sense (Past and Present) Nay, the demand is not loud even for ignoble work See "Average earnings of Betty Taylor," in *Times* of 4th February of this year "Worked from Monday morning at 8 A.M., to Friday night at 5.30 P.M. for 1s 5½d —*Laissez faire*"

<sup>47</sup> See Bacon's note in the *Advancement of Learning*, on "*didicisse fideliter artes*" ("but indeed the accent had need be upon 'fideliter'") It taketh away vain admiration of anything, which is the root of all weakness, for all things are admired either because they are new, or because they are great," &c

<sup>48</sup> Ames, by report of Waldo Emerson, expressed the popular security wisely, saying "that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom, whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your feet are always in the water" Yes, and when the four winds (your only pilots) steer competitively from the four corners, *ὡς δ' ὄτρ' ὁπωρινὸς βορέης φορέησιν ἀκάνθας*, perhaps the wiser mariner may wish for keel and wheel again

see not, in any of our talk of them, justice enough done to their erratic strength of purpose, nor any estimate taken of the strength of endurance of domestic sorrow, in what their women and children suppose a righteous cause. And out of that endurance and suffering, its own fruit will be born with time, and Carlyle's prophecy of them (June, 1850), as it has now come true in the first clause, will in the last

America, too, will find that caucuses, division-lists, stump-oratory, and speeches to Buncombe will not carry men to the immortal gods, that the Washington Congress, and constitutional battle of Kilkenny cats is there, as here, naught for such objects, quite incompetent for such, and, in fine, that said sublime constitutional arrangement will require to be (with terrible throes, and travail such as few expect yet) remodelled, abridged, extended, suppressed, torn asunder, put together again,—not without heroic labour, and effort quite other than that of the stump-orator and the revival preacher, one day

Understand, then, once for all, that no form of government, provided it be a government at all, is, as such, either to be condemned or praised, or contested for in anywise but by fools. But all forms of government are good just so far as they attain this one vital necessity of policy—that the wise and kind, few or many, shall govern the unwise and unkind, and they are evil so far as they miss of this, or reverse it. Nor does the form in any case signify one whit, but its *firmness*, and adaptation to the need, for if there be many foolish persons in a state, and few wise, then it is good that the few govern, and if there be many wise and few foolish, then it is good that the many govern, and if many be wise, yet one wiser, then it is good that one should govern, and so on. Thus, we may have “the ant’s republic, and the realm of bees,” both good in their kind, one for groping, and the other for building, and nobler still, for flying, the Ducal monarchy of those

Intelligent of seasons, that set forth  
The aery caravan, high over seas

Nor need we want examples, among the inferior creatures, of dissoluteness, as well as resoluteness, in government. I once saw democracy finely illustrated by the beetles of North Switzerland, who by universal suffrage, and elytric acclamation, one May twilight, carried it that they would fly over the Lake of Zug, and flew short, to the great disfigurement of the Lake of Zug,—*Κανθάρον λιμήν*—over some leagues square, and to the close of the cockchafer democracy for that year. The old fable of the frogs and the stork finely touches one form of tyranny, but truth will touch it more nearly than fable, for tyranny is not complete when it is only over the idle, but when it is over the laborious and the blind. This description of pelicans and climbing perch, which I find quoted in one of our popular natural histories, out of Sir Emerson Tennant's *Ceylon*, comes as near as may be to the true image of the thing —

Heavy rains came on, and as we stood on the high ground, we observed a pelican on the margin of the shallow pool gorging himself, our people went towards him, and raised a cry of "Fish! fish!" We hurried down, and found numbers of fish struggling upward through the grass, in the rills formed by the trickling of the rain. There was scarcely water to cover them, but nevertheless they made rapid progress up the bank, on which our followers collected about two baskets of them. They were forcing their way up the knoll, and had they not been interrupted, first by the pelican, and afterwards by ourselves, they would in a few minutes have gained the highest point, and descended on the other side into a pool which formed another portion of the tank. In going this distance, however, they must have used muscular exertion enough to have taken them half a mile on level ground, for at these places all the cattle and wild animals of the neighbourhood had latterly come to drink, so that the surface was everywhere indented with footmarks, in addition to the cracks in the surrounding baked mud, into which the fish tumbled in their progress. In those holes which were deep, and the sides perpendicular, they remained to die, and were carried off by kites and crows.

But whether governments be bad or good, one general disadvantage seems to attach to them in modern times—that they are all costly. This, however, is not essentially the fault of the governments. If nations choose to play



at war, they will always find their governments willing to lead the game, and soon coming under that term of Aristophanes, "*κάπηλοι ἀσπίδων*," "shield-sellers." And when (*πῆμ' ἐπὶ πῆματι*) the shields take the form of iron ships, with apparatus "for defence against liquid fire,"—as I see by latest accounts they are now arranging the decks in English dockyards,—they become costly biers enough for the grey convoy of chief-mourner waves, wreathed with funereal foam, to bear back the dead upon; the massy shoulders of those corpse-bearers being intended for quite other work, and to bear the living, and food for the living, if we would let them.

Nor have we the least right to complain of our governments being expensive, so long as we set the government to do precisely the work which brings no return. If our present doctrines of political economy be just, let us trust them to the utmost, take that war business out of the government's hands, and test therein the principles of supply and demand. Let our future sieges of Sebastopol be done by contract—no capture, no pay—(I am prepared to admit that things might sometimes go better so), and let us sell the commands of our prospective battles, with our vicarages, to the lowest bidder, so may we have cheap victories and divinity. On the other hand, if we have so much suspicion of our science that we dare not trust it on military or spiritual business, it would be but reasonable to try whether some authoritative handling may not prosper in matters utilitarian. If we were to set our governments to do useful things instead of mischievous, possibly even the apparatus might in time come to be less costly! The machine, applied to the building of the house, might perhaps pay, when it seems not to pay, applied to pulling it down. If we made in our dockyards ships to carry timber and coals, instead of cannon, and with provision for the brightening of domestic solid culinary fire, instead of for the averting of hostile liquid fire, it might have some effect on the taxes? Or if the iron

bottoms were to bring us home nothing better than ivory and peacocks, instead of martial glory we might at least have gayer suppers, and doors of the right material for dreams after them. Or suppose that we tried the experiment on land instead of water carriage, already the government, not unapproved, carries letters and parcels for us, larger packages may in time follow,—parcels,—even general merchandise? why not, at last, ourselves? Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigation, on the railroads of England, been laid out, instead, under proper government restraint, on really useful railroad work, and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations, we might already have had,—what ultimately it will be found we must have,—quadruple rails, two for passengers, and two for traffic, on every great line, and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointsmen, for half the present fares.

“ὦ Δημόδιον, ὅρᾳς τὰ λαγῶ’ ἃ σοι φέρω?” Suppose it should turn out, finally, that a true government set to true work, instead of being a costly engine, was a paying one? that your government, rightly organized, instead of itself subsisting by an income tax, would produce its subjects some subsistence in the shape of an income dividend!—police and judges duly paid besides, only with less work than the state at present provides for them.

A true government set to true work!—Not easily imagined, still less obtained, but not beyond human hope or ingenuity. Only you will have to alter your election systems somewhat, first. Not by universal suffrage, nor by votes purchaseable with beer, is such government to be had. That is to say, not by universal *equal* suffrage. Every man upwards of twenty, who had been convicted of no legal crime, should have his say in this matter, but afterwards a louder voice, as he grows older, and approves himself wiser. If he has one vote at twenty, he should have two at thirty, four at forty, ten at fifty. For every

one vote which he has with an income of a hundred a year, he should have ten with an income of a thousand, (provided you first see to it that wealth is, as nature intended it to be, the reward of sagacity and industry,—not of good luck in a scramble or a lottery) For every one vote which he had as subordinate in any business, he should have two when he became a master, and every office and authority nationally bestowed inferring trustworthiness and intellect, should have its known proportional number of votes attached to it But into the detail and working of a true system in these matters we cannot now enter, we are concerned as yet with definitions only, and statements of first principles, which will be established now sufficiently for our purposes when we have examined the nature of that form of government last on the list in the previous paper,—the purely “Magistral,” exciting at present its full share of public notice, under its ambiguous title of “slavery”

I have not, however, been able to ascertain in definite terms, from the declaimers against slavery, what they understand by it If they mean only the imprisonment or compulsion of one person by another, such imprisonment or compulsion being in many cases highly expedient, slavery, so defined, would be no evil in itself, but only in its abuse, that is, when men are slaves, who should not be, or masters, who should not be, or under conditions which should not be It is not, for instance, a necessary condition of slavery, nor a desirable one, that parents should be separated from children, or husbands from wives, but the institution of war, against which people declaim with less violence, effects such separations,—not infrequently in a highly permanent manner. To press a sailor, seize a white youth by conscription for a soldier, or carry off a black one for a labourer, may all be right, or all wrong, according to needs and circumstances It is wrong to scourge a man unnecessarily So it is to shoot him Both must be done on occasion, and it is better and kinder to

flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards. The essential thing for all creatures is to be made to do right, how they are made to do it—by pleasant promises, or hard necessities, pathetic oratory, or the whip, is comparatively immaterial. To be deceived is perhaps as incompatible with human dignity as to be whipped, and I suspect the last instrument to be not the worst, for the help of many individuals. The Jewish nation thrived under it, in the hand of a monarch reputed not unwise, it is only the change of whip for scorpion which is inexpedient, and yet that change is as likely to come to pass on the side of licence as of law, for the true scorpion whips are those of the nation's pleasant vices, which are to it as St John's locusts—crown on the head, ravin in the mouth, and sting in the tail. If it will not bear the rule of Athena and her brother, who shepherd without smiting (οὐ πλῆγῃ νέμοντες), Athena at last calls no more in the corners of the streets, and then follows the rule of Tisiphone, who smites without shepherding.

If, however, by slavery, instead of absolute compulsion, is meant the purchase, by money, of the right of compulsion, such purchase is necessarily made whenever a portion of any territory is transferred, for money, from one monarch to another which has happened frequently enough in history, without its being supposed that the inhabitants of the districts so transferred became therefore slaves. In this, as in the former case, the dispute seems about the fashion of the thing, rather than the fact of it. There are two rocks in mid-sea, on each of which, neglected equally by instructive and commercial powers, a handful of inhabitants live as they may. Two merchants bid for the two properties, but not in the same terms. One bids for the people, buys *them*, and sets them to work, under pain of scourge, the other bids for the rock, buys *it*, and throws the inhabitants into the sea. The former is the American, the latter the English method,

of slavery, much is to be said for, and something against, both, which I hope to say in due time and place

If, however, slavery mean not merely the purchase of the right of compulsion, but the purchase of the body and soul of the creature itself for money, it is not, I think, among the black races that purchases of this kind are most extensively made, or that separate souls of a fine make fetch the highest price. This branch of the inquiry we shall have occasion also to follow out at some length, for in the worst instance of the "*Βίων πᾶσις*" we are apt to get only Pyrrhon's answer—*τί φῆς, —ἐπιράμην σε, Ἀδελφον*

The fact is that slavery is not a political institution at all, but an inherent, natural, and eternal inheritance of a large portion of the human race—to whom, the more you give of their own will, the more slaves they will make themselves. In common parlance, we idly confuse captivity with slavery, and are always thinking of the difference between pin-trunks and cowslip-bells, or between carrying wood and clothes-stealing, instead of noting the far more serious differences between Ariel and Caliban, and the means by which practically that difference may be brought about.<sup>49</sup> I should dwell, even in these prefatory

<sup>49</sup> The passage of Plato, referred to in note, p. 269, in its context, respecting the slave who, well dressed and washed, aspires to the hand of his master's daughter, corresponds curiously to the attack of Caliban on Prospero's cell, and there is an undercurrent of meaning throughout, in the *Tempest* as well as in the *Merchant of Venice*, referring in this case to government, as in that to commerce. Miranda ("the wonderful," so addressed first by Ferdinand, "Oh, you wonder!") corresponds to Homer's Arete. Ariel and Caliban are respectively the spirits of freedom and mechanical labour. Prospero ("for hope"), a true governor, opposed to Sycorax, the mother of slavery, her name, "Swine-raven," indicating at once brutality and deathfulness, hence the line—

"As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed, with raven's feather,"—&c.

For all these dreams of Shakespeare, as those of true and strong men must be are "*φαντάσματα θεῶν, καὶ σκιάι τῶν ὄντων*"—phantasms of God, and shadows of things that are. We hardly tell our children, willingly, a fable with no purport in it, yet we think God sends his best messengers only to sing fairy tales to us, all fondness and emptiness. The *Tempest* is just like a grotesque in a rich missal, "clasped where paynims pray." Ariel is the spirit of true liberty, in early stages of human society oppressed by ignorance and wild tyranny venting groans as fast as mill-wheels strike, in shipwreck of states, fearful, so that "all but mariners plunge in the brine, and quit the vessel, then all afire with me," yet having in itself the will and sweetness of truest peace, whence that is especially called

papers, at somewhat more length on this matter, had not all I would say, been said already in vain (not, as I hope, ultimately in vain), by Carlyle, in the first of the  *Latter-day Pamphlets*, which I commend to the reader's gravest reading, together with that as much neglected, and still more immediately needed, on model prisons, and with the great chapter on "Permanence," (fifth of the last section of "Past and Present,") which sums what is known, and foreshadows,—or rather fore-lights, all that is to be learned of National Discipline I have only here farther

"Ariel's" song, "Come unto these yellow sands"—(fenceless, and countless—changing with the sweep of sea—"vaga arena" Compare Horace's opposition of the sea-sand to the dust of the grave "numero carentis"—"exigui," and again compare "animo rotundum percussisse" with "put a girdle round the earth")—and then *take hands*, courtesied when you have, and kissed the wild waves whist" (mind it is "cortesia," not "curtsey,") and read "quiet" for "whist," if you want the full sense Then may you indeed foot it featly, and sweet spirits bear the burden for you—with watch in the night, and call in early morning The power of liberty in elemental transformation follows—"Full fathom five thy father lies of his bones are coral made" Then, giving rest after labour, it "fetches dew from the still vext Bermoothes, and, with a charm joined to their suffered labour, leaves men asleep" Snatching away the feast of the cruel, it seems to them as a harpy, followed by the utterly vile, who cannot see it in any shape but to whom it is the picture of nobody, it still gives shrill harmony to their false and mocking catch, "Thought is free," but leads them into briars and foul places, and at last hollas the hounds upon them Minister of fate against the great criminal, it joins itself with the "incensed seas and shores"—the sword that layeth at it cannot hold, and may "with bemoaned at stabs, as soon kill the still closing waters, as diminish one dowe that is in its plume" As the guile and aid of true love, it is always called by Prospero "fine" (the French "fine"—not the English), or "delicate"—another long note would be needed to explain all the meaning in this word Lastly its work done, and war, it resolves itself to the elements The intense significance of the last song, "Where the bee sucks," I will examine in its due place The types of slavery in Caliban are more palpable and need not be dwelt on now though I will notice them also, severally, in their proper places,—the heart of his slavery is in his worship "That's a brave god, and bears celestial—liquor" But, in illustration of the sense in which the Latin "benignus" and "malignus" are to be coupled with Eleuthera and Douleia, note that Caliban's torment is always the physical reflection of his own nature—"cramps" and "side stitches that shall pen thy breath up—thou shalt be pinched—as thick as honeycombs," the whole nature of slavery being one cramp and cretinous contraction Fancy this of Ariel! You may fetter him, but you set no mark on him, you may put him to hard work and far journey, but you cannot give him a cramp

Of Shakespeare's names I will afterwards speak at more length they are curiously—often barbarously—mixed out of various traditions and languages Three of the clearest in meaning have been already noticed Desdemona, "*δυσδαμονία*," "miserable fortune," is also plain enough Othello is, I believe, "the careful," all the calamity of the tragedy arising from the single flaw and error in his magnificently collected strength Ophelia, "serviceableness," the true lost wife of Hamlet, is marked as having a Greek name by that of her brother,

to examine the nature of one world-wide and everlasting form of slavery, wholesome in use, as deadly in abuse—the service of the rich by the poor

As in all previous discussions of our subject, we must study this relation in its simplest elements, in order to reach its first principles

The simplest state of it is, then, this <sup>50</sup> a wise and provident person works much, consumes little, and lays by store, an improvident person works little, consumes all the produce, and lays by no store Accident interrupts the daily work, or renders it less productive, the idle person must then starve, or be supported by the provident one,—who, having him thus at his mercy, may either refuse to maintain him altogether, or, which will evidently be more to his own interest, say to him, "I will maintain you, indeed, but you shall now work hard, instead of indolently, and instead of being allowed to lay by what you save, as you might have done, had you remained independent, I will take all the surplus You would not lay it up for yourself, it is wholly your own fault that has thrown you into my power, and I will force you to work, or starve, yet you shall have no profit, only your daily bread" This mode of treatment has now become so universal that it is supposed the only natural—nay, the only possible one, and the market wages are calmly de-

Laertes, and its signification is once exquisitely alluded to in that brother's last word of her, where her gentle preciousness is opposed to the uselessness of the churlish clergy—"A *ministering* angel shall my sister be, when thou liest howling" Hamlet is, I believe, connected in some way with "homely," the entire event of the tragedy turning on betrayal or home duty Hermione (*Ἑρμια*), "pillar-like" (*ἡ εἶδος ἔχει χροσῆς Ἀφροδίτης*) Titania (*τιτάνη*), "the queen," Benedict and Beatrice, "blessed and blessing," Valentine and Proteus, enduring (or strong), (valens) and changeful Iago and Iachimo have evidently the same root—probably the Spanish Iago, Jacob, "the supplanter" Leonatus, and other such names, are interpreted, or played with, in the plays themselves For the interpretation of Sycorax, and reference to her raven's feather, I am indebted to Mr John R. Wise

<sup>50</sup> In the present general examination I concede so much to ordinary economists as to ignore all innocent poverty I assume poverty to be always criminal, the conceivable exceptions we will examine afterwards

fined by economists as "the sum which will maintain the labourer"

The power of the provident person to do this is only checked by the correlative power of some neighbour of similarly frugal habits, who says to the labourer—"I will give you a little more than my provident friend—come and work for me"

The power of the provident over the improvident depends thus primarily on their relative numbers, secondarily, on the modes of agreement of the adverse parties with each other. The level of wages is a variable function of the number of provident and idle persons in the world, of the enmity between them as classes, and of the agreement between those of the same class. It depends, from beginning to end, on moral conditions.

Supposing the rich to be entirely selfish, it is always for their interest that the poor should be as numerous as they can employ and restrain. For, granting the entire population no larger than the ground can easily maintain,—that the classes are stringently divided,—and that there is sense or strength of hand enough with the rich to secure obedience, then, if nine-tenths of a nation are poor, the remaining tenth have the service of nine persons each, but,<sup>51</sup> if eight-tenths are poor, only of four each, if seven-tenths are poor, of two and a third each, if six-tenths are poor, of one and a half each, and, if five-tenths are poor, of only one each, but, practically, if the rich strive always to obtain more power over the poor, instead of to raise them,—and if, on the other hand, the poor become continually more vicious and numerous, through neglect and oppression,—though the range of the power of the rich increases, its tenure becomes less secure, until, at last, the measure of iniquity being full,

<sup>51</sup> I say nothing yet of the quality of the servants, which, nevertheless, is the gist of the business. Will you have Paul Veronese to paint your ceiling, or the plumber from over the way? Both will work for the same money, Paul, if anything, a little the cheaper of the two, if you keep him in good humour, only you have to discern him first, which will need eyes



revolution, civil war, or the subjection of the state to a healthier or stronger one, closes the moral corruption and industrial disease

It is rare, however, that things come to this extremity. Kind persons among the rich, and wise among the poor, modify the connexion of the classes: the efforts made to raise and relieve on the one side, and the success of honest toil on the other, bind and blend the orders of society into the confused tissue of half-felt obligation, sullenly-rendered obedience, and variously-directed, or misdirected, toil, which form the warp of daily life. But this great law rules all the wild design of the weaving, that success (while society is guided by laws of competition) signifies always so much victory over your neighbour as to obtain the direction of his work, and to take the profits of it. This is the real source of all great riches. No man can become largely rich by his personal toil.<sup>52</sup> The work of his own hands, wisely directed, will indeed always maintain himself and his family, and make fitting provision for his age. But it is only by the discovery of some method of taxing the labour of others that he can become opulent. Every increase of his capital enables him to extend this taxation more widely, that is, to invest larger funds in the maintenance of labourers,—to direct, accordingly, vaster and yet vaster masses of labour, and to appropriate its profits. There is much confusion of idea on the subject of this appropriation. It is, of course, the interest of the employer to disguise it from the persons employed, and for his own comfort and complacency he often desires no less to disguise it from himself. And it is matter of much doubt with me, how far the foolish arguments used habitually on this subject are indeed the honest expressions of foolish convictions,—or rather (as I am sometimes forced to conclude, from the irritation with

<sup>52</sup> By his art he may, but only when its produce, or the sight or hearing of it, becomes a subject of dispute, so as to enable the artist to tax the labour of multitudes highly, in exchange for his own.

which they are advanced) are resolutely dishonest, wilful, sophisms, arranged so as to mask to the last moment the real state of economy, and future duties of men By taking a simple example, and working it thoroughly out, the subject may be rescued from all but determined misconception

Let us imagine a society of peasants, living on a river-shore, exposed to destructive inundation at somewhat extended intervals, and that each peasant possesses of this good, but imperilled ground, more than he needs to cultivate for immediate subsistence We will assume farther (and with too great probability of justice), that the greater part of them indolently keep in tillage just as much land as supplies them with daily food,—that they leave their children idle and untaught, and take no precautions against the rise of the stream But one of them (we will say only one, for the sake of greater clearness) cultivates carefully all the ground of his estate, makes his children work hard and healthily, uses his spare time and theirs in building a rampart against the river; and at the end of some years has in his storehouses large reserves of food and clothing, and in his stables a well-tended breed of cattle

The torrent rises at last—sweeps away the harvests and many of the cottages of the careless peasantry, and leaves them destitute. They naturally come for help to the provident one, whose fields are unwasted, and whose granaries are full He has the right to refuse it them no one disputes this right But he will probably not refuse it, it is not his interest to do so, even were he entirely selfish and cruel The only question with him will be on what terms his aid is to be granted

Clearly, not on terms of mere charity. To maintain his neighbours in idleness would be his ruin and theirs. He will require work from them, in exchange for their maintenance, and, whether in kindness or cruelty, all the work they can give. Not now the three or four hours

they were wont to spend on their own land, but the eight or ten hours they ought to have spent. But how will he apply this labour? The men are now his slaves—nothing less. On pain of starvation, he can force them to work in the manner, and to the end he chooses. And it is by his wisdom in this choice that the worthiness of his mastership is proved, or its unworthiness. Evidently, he must first set them to bank out the water in some temporary way, and to get their ground cleansed and resown, else, in any case, their continued maintenance will be impossible. That done, and while he has still to feed them, suppose he makes them raise a secure rampart for their own ground against all future flood, and rebuild their houses in safer places, with the best material they can find, being allowed time out of their working hours to fetch such material from a distance. And for the food and clothing advanced, he takes security in land that as much shall be returned at a convenient period.

At the end of a few years, we may conceive this security redeemed, and the debt paid. The prudent peasant has sustained no loss, but is no richer than he was, and has had all his trouble for nothing. But he has enriched his neighbours materially, bettered their houses, secured their land, and rendered them, in worldly matters, equal to himself. In all true and final sense, he has been throughout their lord and king.

We will next trace his probable line of conduct, presuming his object to be exclusively the increase of his own fortune. After roughly recovering and cleansing the ground, he allows the ruined peasantry only to build huts upon it, such as he thinks protective enough from the weather to keep them in working health. The rest of their time he occupies first in pulling down and rebuilding on a magnificent scale his own house, and in adding large dependencies to it. This done, he follows the example of the first great Hebrew financier, and in exchange for his continued supply of corn, buys as much

of his neighbours' land, as he thinks he can superintend the management of, and makes the former owners securely embank and protect the ceded portion. By this arrangement, he leaves to a certain number of the peasantry only as much ground as will just maintain them in their existing numbers. As the population increases, he takes the extra hands, who cannot be maintained on the narrowed estates, for his own servants, employs some to cultivate the ground he has bought, giving them of its produce merely enough for subsistence, with the surplus, which, under his energetic and careful superintendence, will be large, he supports a train of servants for state, and a body of workmen, whom he educates in ornamental arts. He now can splendidly decorate his house, lay out its ground magnificently, and richly supply his table, and that of his household and retinue. And thus, without any abuse of right, we should find established all the phenomena of poverty and riches, which (it is supposed necessarily) accompany modern civilization. In one part of the district, we should have unhealthy land, miserable dwellings, and half-starved poor, in another, a well-ordered estate, well-fed servants, and refined conditions of highly-educated and luxurious life.

I have put the two cases in simplicity, and to some extremity. But though in more complex and qualified operation, all the relations of society are but the expansion of these two typical sequences of conduct and result. I do not say, observe, that the first procedure is entirely right, still less, that the second is wholly wrong. Servants, and artists, and splendour of habitation and retinue, have all their use, propriety, and office. I only wish the reader to understand clearly what they cost, that the condition of having them is the subjection to you of a certain number of imprudent or unfortunate persons (or, it may be, more fortunate than their master), over whose destinies you exercise a boundless control. "Riches" mean eternally and essentially this, and may heaven send at

last a time when those words of our best-reputed economist shall be true, and we shall indeed "all know what it is to be rich," that it is to be slave-master over farthest earth, and over all ways and thoughts of men. Every operative you employ is your true servant distant or near, subject to your immediate orders, or ministering to your widely-communicated caprice,—for the pay he stipulates, or the price he tempts,—all are alike under this great dominion of the gold. The milliner who makes the dress is as much a servant (more so, in that she uses more intelligence in the service) as the maid who puts it on, the carpenter who smooths the door, as the footman who opens it, the tradesmen who supply the table, as the labourers and sailors who supply the tradesmen. Why speak of these lower services? Painters and singers, (whether of note or rhyme,) jesters and story-tellers, moralists, historians, priests—so far as these, in any degree, paint, or sing, or tell their tale, or charm their charm, or "perform" their rite, for pay,—in so far they are all slaves, abject utterly, if the service be for pay only, abject less and less in proportion to the degress of love and of wisdom which enter into their duty, or can enter into it, according as their function is to do the bidding and the work of a man,—or to amuse, tempt, and deceive a child.

There may be thus, and, to a certain extent, there always is, a government of the rich by the poor, as of the poor by the rich, but the latter is the prevailing and necessary one, and it consists, observe, of two distinct functions—the collection of the profits of labour from those who would have misused them, and the administration of those profits for the service either of the same person in future, or of others; or, as is more frequently the case in modern times, for the service of the collector himself.

The examination of these various modes of collection and use of riches will form the third branch of our future

inquiries, but the key to the whole subject lies in the clear understanding of the difference between selfish and unselfish expenditure. It is not easy, by any course of reasoning, to enforce this on the generally unwilling hearer, yet the definition of unselfish expenditure is brief and simple. It is expenditure which, if you are a capitalist, does not pay you, but pays somebody else, and if you are a consumer, does not please you, but pleases somebody else. Take one special instance, in further illustration of the general type given above. I did not invent that type, but spoke of a real river, and of real peasantry, the languid and sickly race which inhabits, or haunts—for they are often more like spectres than living men—the thorny desolation of the banks of the Arve. Some years ago, a society formed at Geneva offered to embank the river for the ground which would have been recovered by the operation, but the offer was refused by the (then Sardinian) government. The capitalists saw that this expenditure would have “paid,” if the ground saved from the river was to be theirs. But if, when the offer that had this aspect of profit was refused, they had nevertheless persisted in the plan, and merely taking security for the return of their outlay, lent the funds for the work, and thus saved a whole race of human souls from perishing in a pestiferous fen (as, I presume, some among them would, at personal risk, have dragged any one drowning creature out of the current of the stream, and not expected payment there for), such expenditure would have precisely corresponded to the use of his power made in the first instance, by our supposed richer peasant—it would have been the king’s, of grace, instead of the usurer’s, for gain.

“Impossible, absurd, utopian!” exclaim nine-tenths of the few readers whom these words may find

No, good reader, *this* is not utopian but I will tell you what would have seemed, if we had not seen it, utopian on the side of evil instead of good; that ever men should have come to value their money so much

more than their lives, that if you call upon them to become soldiers, and take chance of bullet, for their pride's sake, they will do it gaily, without thinking twice, but if you ask them, for their country's sake, to spend a hundred pounds without security of getting back a hundred-and-five,<sup>53</sup> they will laugh in your face

Not but that also this game of life-giving and taking is in the end, somewhat more costly than other forms of play might be. Rifle practice is, indeed, a not unhealthy pastime, and a feather on the top of the head is a pleasing appendage, but while learning the stops and fingering of the sweet instrument, does no one ever calculate the cost of an overture? What melody does Tityrus meditate on his tenderly spiral pipe? The leaden seed of it, broad cast, true conical "Dents de Lion" seed—needing less allowance for the wind than is usual with that kind of herb—what crop are you likely to have of it? Suppose, instead of this volunteer marching and countermarching, you were to do a little volunteer ploughing and counterploughing? It is more difficult to do it straight the dust of the earth, so disturbed, is more grateful than for merely rhythmic footsteps. Golden cups, also, given for good ploughing, would be more suitable in colour (ruby glass, for the wine which "giveth his colour" on the ground, as well as in the cup, might be

<sup>53</sup> I have not hitherto touched on the subject of interest of money, it is too complex, and must be reserved for its proper place in the body of the work. (I should be glad if a writer, who sent me some valuable notes on this subject, and asked me to return a letter which I still keep at his service, would send me his address.) The definition of interest (apart from compensation for risk) is, "the exponent of the comfort of accomplished labour, separated from its power," the power being what is lent and the French economists who have maintained the entire illegality of interest are wrong, yet by no means so curiously or wildly wrong as the English and French ones opposed to them, whose opinions have been collected by Dr. Whewell at page 41 of his *Lectures*, it never seeming to occur to the mind of the compiler, any more than to the writers whom he quotes, that it is quite possible, and even (according to Jewish proverb) prudent, for men to hoard, as ants and mice do, for use, not usury, and lay by something for winter nights, in the expectation of rather sharing than lending the scrapings. My Savoyard squirrels would pass a pleasant time of it under the snow-laden pine-branches, if they always declined to economize because no one would pay them interest on nuts.

fitter for the rifle prize in ladies' hands), or, conceive a little volunteer exercise with the spade, other than such as is needed for moat and breastwork, or even for the burial of the fruit of the leaden avena-seed, subject to the shrill Lemures' criticism—

Wer hat das Haus so schlecht gebaut?

If you were to embank Lincolnshire now—more stoutly against the sea? or strip the peat of Solway, or plant Plinlimmon moors with larch—then, in due hour of year, some amateur reaping and threshing?

“Nay, we reap and thresh by steam, in these advanced days”

I know it, my wise and economical friends The stout arms God gave you to win your bread by, you would fain shoot your neighbours,—and God's sweet singers with,<sup>54</sup> then you invoke the fiends to your farm-service, and—

When young and old come forth to play  
On a sulphurous holiday,  
Tell how the darkling goblin sweat  
(His feast of cinders duly set),  
And, belching night, where breathed the morn,  
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn  
That ten day-labourers could not end

But we will press the example closer. On a green knoll above that plain of the Arve, between Cluse and

<sup>54</sup> Compare Chaucer's feeling respecting birds (from Canace's falcon, to the nightingale, singing “Domine, labia—” to the Lord of Love) with the usual modern British sentiments on this subject Or even Cowley's—

“What prince's choir of music can excel  
That which within this shade does dwell,  
To which we nothing pay, or give,  
They, like all other poets, live  
Without reward, or thanks for their obliging pains!  
’Tis well if they become not prey”

Yes; it is better than well, particularly since the seed sown by the wayside has been protected by the peculiar appropriation of part of the church-rates in our country parishes See the remonstrance from a “Country Parson,” in the *Times* of June 4th (or 5th, the letter is dated June 3rd), 1862 —“I have heard at a vestry meeting a good deal of higgling over a few shillings' outlay in cleaning the church, but I have never heard any dissatisfaction expressed on account of that part of the rate which is invested in 50 or 100 dozens of birds' heads”



Bonneville, there was, in the year 1860, a cottage, inhabited by a well-doing family—man and wife, three children, and the grandmother. I call it a cottage, but in truth, it was a large chimney on the ground, wide at the bottom, (so that the family might live round the fire), with one broken window in it, and an unclosing door. The family, I say, was “well-doing,” at least, it was hopeful and cheerful, the wife healthy, the children, for Savoyards, pretty and active, but the husband threatened with decline, from exposure under the cliffs of the Mont Vergi by day, and to draughts between every plank of his chimney in the frosty nights.

“Why could he not plaster the chinks?” asks the practical reader. For the same reason that your child cannot wash its face and hands till you have washed them many a day for it, and will not wash them when it can, till you force it.

I passed this cottage often in my walks, had its window and door mended, sometimes mended also a little the meal of sour bread and broth, and generally got kind greeting and smile from the face of young or old, which greeting, this year, narrowed itself into the half-recognizing stare of the elder child, and the old woman’s tears, for the father and mother were both dead,—one of sickness, the other of sorrow. It happened that I passed not alone, but with a companion, a practised English joiner, who, while these people were dying of cold, had been employed from six in the morning to six of the evening, for two months, in fitting the panels without nails, of a single door in a large house in London. Three days of his work taken, at the right time, from the oak panels, and applied to the larch timbers, would have saved these Savoyards’ lives. He would have been maintained equally, (I suppose him equally paid for his work by the owner of the greater house, only the work not consumed selfishly on his own walls,) and the two peasants, and eventually, probably their children, saved.

There are, therefore, let me finally enforce, and leave with the reader this broad conclusion,—three things to be considered in employing any poor person. It is not enough to give him employment. You must employ him first to produce useful things, secondly, of the several (suppose equally useful) things he can equally well produce, you must set him to make that which will cause him to lead the healthiest life, lastly, of the things produced, it remains a question of wisdom and conscience how much you are to take yourself, and how much to leave to others. A large quantity, remember, unless you destroy it, *must* always be so left at one time or another, the only questions you have to decide are, not what you will give, and what you will keep, but when, and how, and to whom, you will give. The natural law of human life is, of course, that in youth a man shall labour and lay by store for his old age, and when age comes, should use what he has laid by, gradually slackening his toil, and allowing himself more frank use of his store, taking care always to leave himself as much as will surely suffice for him beyond any possible length of life. What he has gained, or by tranquil and unanxious toil continues to gain, more than is enough for his own need, he ought so to administer, while he yet lives, as to see the good of it again beginning, in other hands, for thus he has himself the greatest sum of pleasure from it, and faithfully uses his sagacity in its control. Whereas most men, it appears, dislike the sight of their fortunes going out into service again, and say to themselves,—“I can indeed nowise prevent this money from falling at last into the hands of others, nor hinder the good of it, such as it is, from becoming theirs, not mine, but at least let a merciful death save me from being a witness of their satisfaction, and may God so far be gracious to me as to let no good come of any of this money of mine before my eyes.” Supposing this feeling unconquerable, the safest way of rationally indulging it would be for the capitalist at once

to spend all his fortune on himself, which might actually, in many cases, be quite the rightest as well as the pleasantest thing to do, if he had just tastes and worthy passions. But, whether for himself only, or through the hands and for the sake of others also, the law of wise life is, that the maker of the money should also be the spender of it, and spend it, approximately, all, before he dies, so that his true ambition as an economist should be, to die, not as rich, but as poor, as possible, calculating the ebb tide of possession in true and calm proportion to the ebb tide of life. Which law, checking the wing of accumulative desire in the mid-volley,<sup>55</sup> and leading to peace of possession and fulness of fruition in old age, is also wholesome, in that by the freedom of gift, together with present help and counsel, it at once endears and dignifies age in the sight of youth, which then no longer strips the bodies of the dead, but receives the grace of the living. Its chief use would (or will be, for men are indeed capable of attaining to this much use of their reason), that some temperance and measure will be put to the acquisitiveness of commerce.<sup>56</sup> For as things stand, a man holds it his duty to be temperate in his food, and of his body, but for no duty to be temperate in his riches, and of his mind. He sees that he ought not to waste his youth and his flesh for luxury, but he will waste his age, and his soul, for money, and think it no wrong, nor the *delirium tremens* of the intellect any evil. But the law of life is, that a man should fix the sum he desires to make annually, as the food he desires to eat daily; and stay when he has

<sup>55</sup> καὶ πενίαν ἡγουμένους εἶναι μὴ τὸ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐλάττω ποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τὴν ἀπληστίαν πλεῖω.—*Laws*, v. 8. Read the context and compare "He who spends for all that is noble, and gains by nothing but what is just, will hardly be notably wealthy, or distressfully poor"—*Laws*, v. 42.

<sup>56</sup> The fury of modern trade arises chiefly out of the possibility of making sudden fortune by largeness of transaction, and accident of discovery or contrivance. I have no doubt that the final interest of every nation is to check the action of these commercial lotteries, and that all great accidental gains or losses should be national,—not individual. But speculation absolute, unconnected with commercial effort, is an unmitigated evil in a state and the root of countless evils beside.

reached the limit, refusing increase of business, and leaving it to others, so obtaining due freedom of time for better thoughts. How the gluttony of business is punished, a bill of health for the principals of the richest city houses, issued annually, would show in a sufficiently impressive manner

I know, of course, that these statements will be received by the modern merchant as an active border rider of the sixteenth century would have heard of its being proper for men of the Marches to get their living by the spade instead of the spur. But my business is only to state veracities and necessities, I neither look for the acceptance of the one, nor promise anything for the nearness of the other. Near or distant, the day will assuredly come when the merchants of a state shall be its true "ministers of exchange," its porters, in the double sense of carriers and gate-keepers, bringing all lands into frank and faithful communication, and knowing for their master of guild, Hermes the herald, instead of Mercury the gain-guarder.

And now, finally, for immediate rule to all whom it concerns

The distress of any population means that they need food, house-room, clothes, and fuel. You can never, therefore, be wrong in employing any labourer to produce food, house-room, clothes, or fuel, but you are *always* wrong if you employ him to produce nothing, (for then some other labourer must be worked double time to feed him), and you are generally wrong, at present, if you employ him (unless he can do nothing else) to produce works of art, or luxuries, because modern art is mostly on a false basis, and modern luxury is criminally great.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> It is especially necessary that the reader should keep his mind fixed on the methods of consumption and destruction, as the true sources of national poverty. Men are apt to watch rather the exchanges in a state than its damages, but the exchanges are only of importance so far as they bring about these last. A large number of the purchases made by the richer classes are mere forms of interchange of unused property, wholly without effect on national prosperity. It matters nothing to the state whether, if a china pipkin be rated as worth a hundred pounds,

The way to produce more food is mainly to bring in fresh ground, and increase facilities of carriage,—to break rock, exchange earth, drain the moist, and water the dry, to mend roads, and build harbours of refuge. Taxation thus spent will annihilate taxation, but spent in war, it annihilates revenue.

The way to produce house-room is to apply your force first to the humblest dwellings. When your bricklayers are out of employ, do not build splendid new streets, but better the old ones, send your paviments and slaters to the poorest villages, and see that your poor are healthily lodged before you try your hand on stately architecture. You will find its stateliness rise better under the trowel afterwards, and we do not yet build so well as that we need hasten to display our skill to future ages. Had the labour which has decorated the Houses of Parliament filled, instead, rents in walls and roofs throughout the county of Middlesex, and our deputies met to talk within massive walls that would have needed no stucco for five hundred years,—the decoration might have been better afterwards, and the talk now. And touching even our highly conscientious church building, it may be well to remember that in the best days of church plans, their masons called themselves "*logeurs du bon Dieu*," and that since, according to the most trusted reports, God spends a good deal of His time in cottages as well as in churches, He might perhaps like to be a little better lodged there also.

A has the pipkin and B the pounds, or A the pounds and B the pipkin. But if the pipkin is pretty, and A or B breaks it, there is national loss, not otherwise. So again, when the loss has really taken place, no shifting of the shoulders that bear it will do away with the fact of it. There is an intensely ludicrous notion in the public mind respecting the abolishment of debt by denying it. When a debt is denied, the lender loses instead of the borrower, that is all. The loss is precisely, accurately, everlastingly the same. The Americans borrow money to spend in blowing up their own houses. They deny their debt, by one third already, gold being at fifty premium, and will probably deny it wholly. That merely means that the holders of the notes are to be the losers instead of the issuers. The quantity of loss is precisely equal, and irrevocable, it is the quantity of human industry spent in explosion, plus the quantity of goods exploded. Honour only decides *who* shall pay the sum lost, not whether it is to be paid or not. Paid it must be, and to the uttermost farthing.

The way to get more clothes is—not, necessarily, to get more cotton. There were words written twenty years ago which would have saved many of us some shivering had they been minded in time. Shall we read them?

“The Continental people, it would seem, are importing our machinery, beginning to spin cotton and manufacture for themselves, to cut us out of this market and then out of that! Sad news indeed, but irremediable. By no means the saddest news—the saddest news is, that we should find our national existence, as I sometimes hear it said, depend on selling manufactured cotton at a farthing an ell cheaper than any other people. A most narrow stand for a great nation to base itself on! A stand which, with all the Corn-Law abrogations conceivable, I do not think will be capable of enduring.

“My friends, suppose we quitted that stand, suppose we came honestly down from it and said—‘This is our minimum of cotton prices, we care not, for the present, to make cotton any cheaper. Do you, if it seem so blessed to you, make cotton cheaper. Fill your lungs with cotton fur, your heart with copperas fumes, with rage and mutiny, become ye the general gnomes of Europe, slaves of the lamp!’ I admire a nation which fancies it will die if it do not undersell all other nations to the end of the world. Brothers, we will cease to undersell them, we will be content to equal-sell them, to be happy selling equally with them! I do not see the use of underselling them: cotton-cloth is already two pence a yard, or lower, and yet bare backs were never more numerous among us. Let inventive men cease to spend their existence incessantly contriving how cotton can be made cheaper, and try to invent a little how cotton at its present cheapness could be somewhat justlier divided among us.

“Let inventive men consider—whether the secret of this universe does after all consist in making money.

With a hell which means—"failing to make money, I do not think there is any heaven possible that would suit one well. In brief, all this Mammon gospel of supply-and-demand, competition, *laissez faire*, and devil take the hindmost" (foremost, is it not, rather, Mr Carlyle?), "begins to be one of the shabbiest gospels ever preached" (In the matter of clothes, decidedly)

The way to produce more fuel is first to make your coal mines safer, by sinking more shafts, then set all your convicts to work in them, and if, as is to be hoped, you succeed in diminishing the supply of that sort of labourer, consider what means there may be, first of growing forest where its growth will improve climate, then of splintering the forests which now make continents of fruitful land pathless and poisonous, into faggots for fire,—so gaining at once dominion sunwards and icewards. Your steam power has been given you (you will find eventually) for work such as that, and not for excursion trains, to give the labourer a moment's breath, at the peril of his breath for ever, from amidst the cities which you have crushed into masses of corruption. When you know how to build cities, and how to rule them, you will be able to breathe in their streets, and the "excursion" will be the afternoon's walk or game in the fields round them. Long ago, Claudian's peasant of Verona knew, and we must yet learn, in his fashion, the difference between *viva* and *vita*

"But nothing of this work will pay?"

No, no more than it pays to dust your rooms, or wash your doorsteps. It will pay, not at first in currency, but in that which is the end and the source of currency,—in life, (and in currency richly afterwards). It will pay in that which is more than life,—in "God's first creature, which was light," whose true price has not yet been reckoned in any currency, and yet into the image of which all wealth, one way or other, must be cast. For your riches must either be as the lightning, which,

begot but in a cloud,  
 Though shining bright, and speaking loud,  
 Whilst it begins, concludes its violent race,  
 And, where it gilds, it wounds the place,

or else as the lightning of the sacred sign, which shines from one part of the heaven to the other There is no other choice, you must either take dust for deity, spectre for possession, fettered dream for life, and for epitaph, this reversed verse of the great Hebrew hymn of economy (Psalm cxii) —“He hath gathered together, he hath stripped the poor, his iniquity remaineth for ever” Or else, having the sun of justice to shine on you, and the sincere substance of good in your possession, and the pure law and liberty of life within you, leave men to write this better legend over your grave —

“He hath dispersed abroad He hath given to the poor His righteousness remaineth for ever.”

The present paper completes the definitions necessary for future service The next in order will be the first chapter of the body of the work \*

These introductory essays are as yet in imperfect form, I suffer them to appear, though they were not intended for immediate publication, for the sake of such chance service as may be found in them But hoping afterwards to enlarge and illustrate them with fuller notes, I have too much spared at present the labour, always very irksome to me, of press correction †, some amusing arrangements of type have resulted, such as the rare Greek metre in which Xenophon—sent as I thought in unmistakeable manuscript, but without sufficient warning of his prosaic character—appears in p 217 “Phantasm, or of wealth,” for “or phantasm of wealth,” on the following page, “learning” for “leaning,” said of Shylock’s speech, p 262, “toccaren” for “soccornen,” p 254, (I forgot to compare Virgil’s “quæ maxima turba” with Dante’s “gente troppa,” quoted just before,) and “ἀναρβύναται” for “ἀνομαρέναται,” p 265, are perhaps worth note for correction “Taking daguerreotypes,” instead of “daguerreotyping,” in p 246, line 3 from bottom, will make the sentence grammar, and I ought to have written “drachma” instead of “stater” three lines before, for though Anstophanes, in the celebrated passage of the *Clouds*, which best illustrates the point in question, speaks of gold, the Attic silver was the true standard when the state was prospering The first note in p 263 is misplaced, it belongs to the fourth line of that page, “Charis becomes Charitas”, and it requires a word or two in further illustration The derivation of words is like that of rivers there is one real source, usually small, unlikely, and difficult to find, far up among the hills, then, as the word flows on and comes into service, it takes in the force of other words from other sources, and becomes itself quite another word—even more than one word, after the junction—a word as it were of many waters, sometimes

\* Ruskin’s plan to write an exhaustive treatise on Political Economy remained unfilled

† The errors here indicated by Ruskin have been corrected in the present edition



both sweet and bitter. Thus the whole force of our English "charity" depends on the gutteral in "charis" getting confused with the c of the Latin "carus," thenceforward throughout the middle ages, the two ideas ran on together, and both got confused with St. Paul's *αγάπη*, which expresses a different idea in all sorts of ways, our "charity" having not only brought in the entirely foreign sense of almsgiving, but lost the essential sense of contentment, and lost much more in getting too far away from the "charis" of the final Gospel benedictions. For truly it is fine Christianity we have come to, which professing to expect the perpetual grace of its Founder, has not itself grace enough to save it from overreaching its friends in sixpenny bargains, and which, supplicating evening and morning the forgiveness of its own debts, goes forth, in the daytime to take its fellow-servants by the throat, saying,—not "Pay me that thou owest," but "Pay me that thou owest me *not*."

Not but that we sometimes wear Ophelia's rue with a difference, and call it "Herb o' grace o' Sundays," taking consolation out of the offertory with—"Look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again." Comfortable words, indeed, and good to set against the old royalty of Largesse—

they are as changeful as opal, and like opal, usually have one colour by reflected, and another by transmitted, light. But they are true jewels for all that, and full of noble enchantment for those who can use them, for those who cannot, I am content to repeat the words I wrote four years ago, in the appendix to the *Two Paths*—

"The entire purpose of a great thinker may be difficult to fathom, and we may be over and over again more or less mistaken in guessing at his meaning, but the real, profound, nay, quite bottomless and unredeemable mistake, is the fool's thought, that he had no meaning."